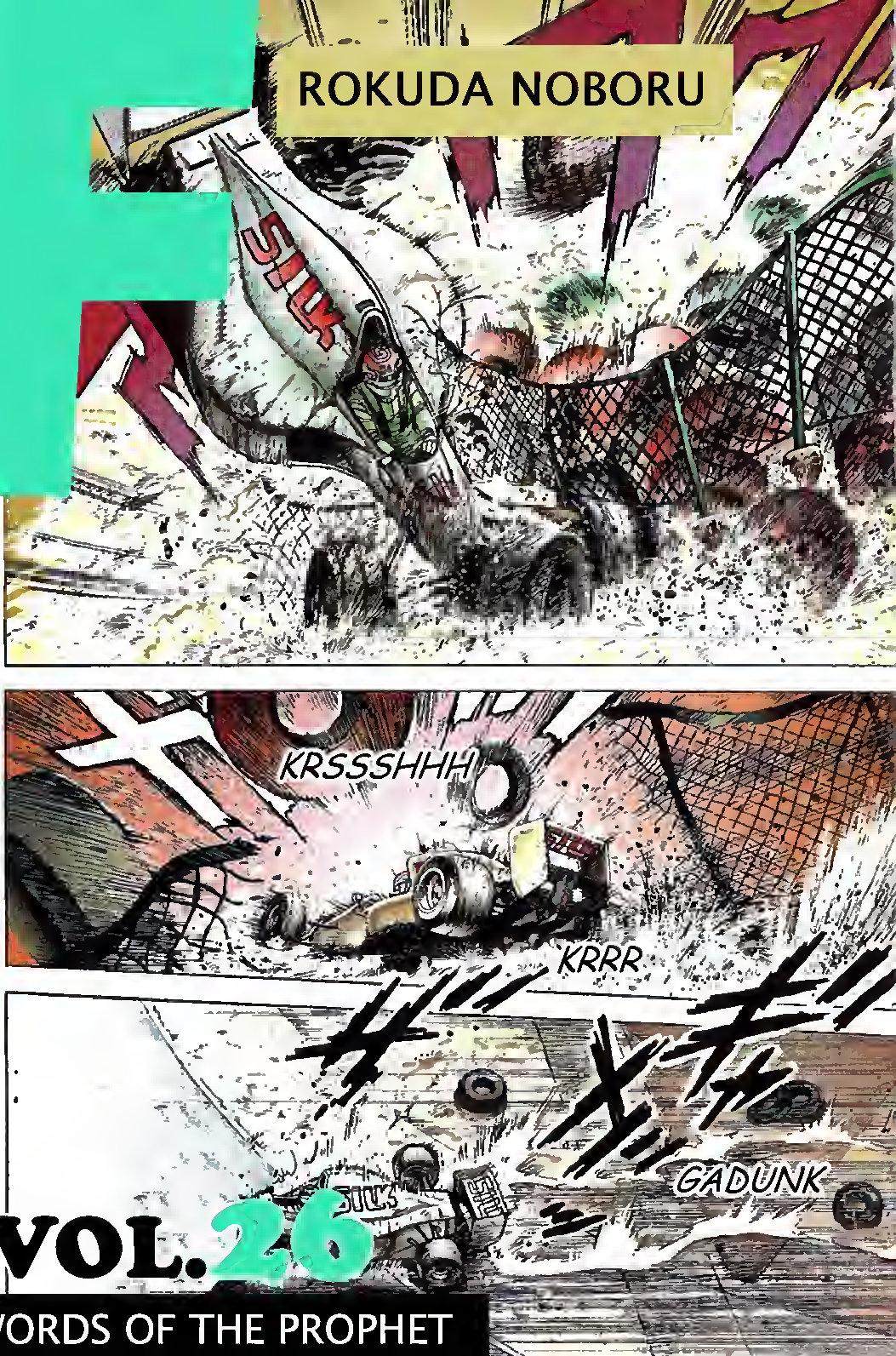
Vol.26

ROKUDA NOBORU

F
VOL.26

ROKUDA NOBORU



VOL.26

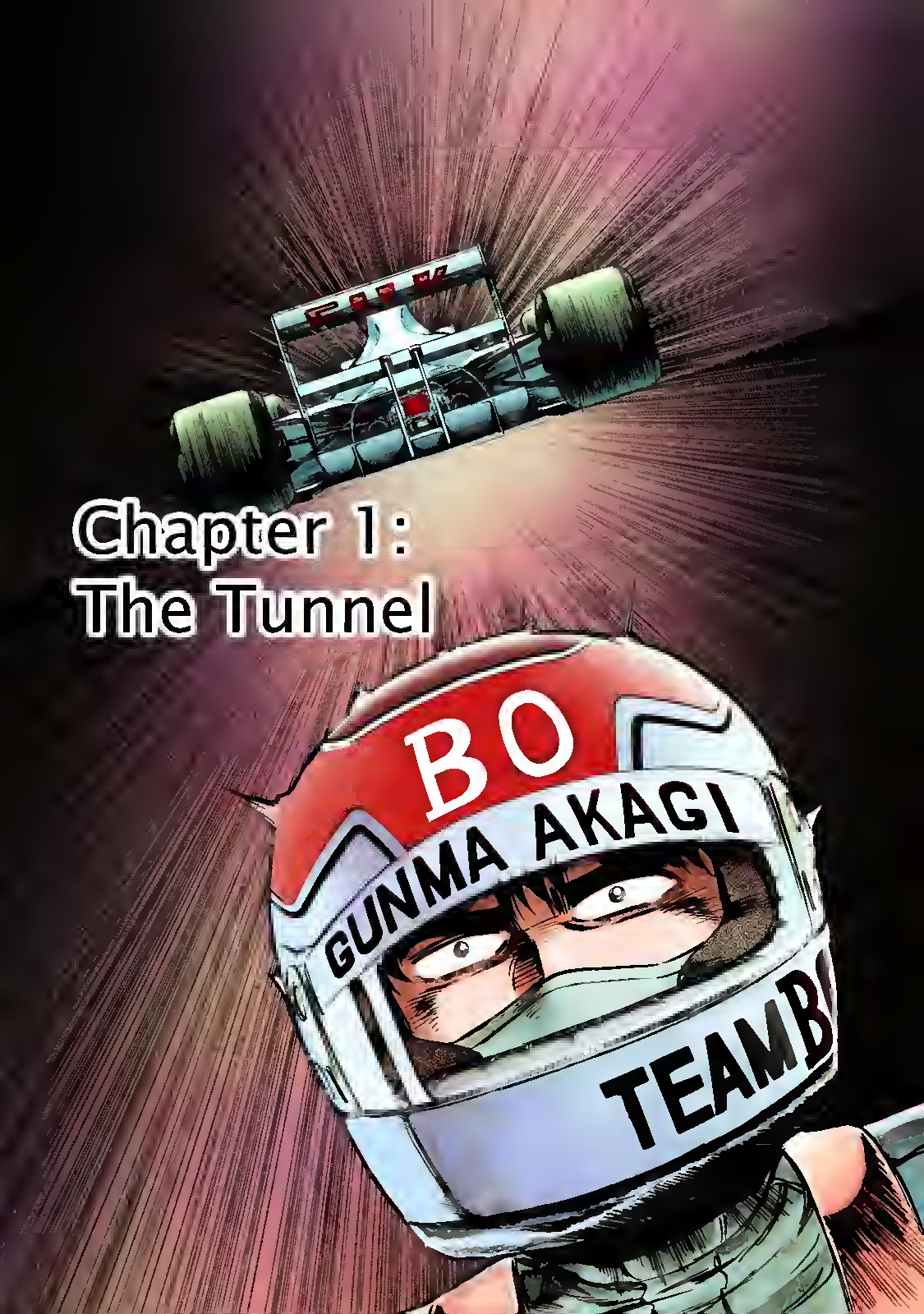
WORDS OF THE PROPHET

F

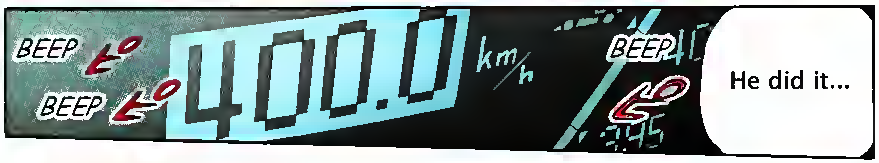
VOL.26

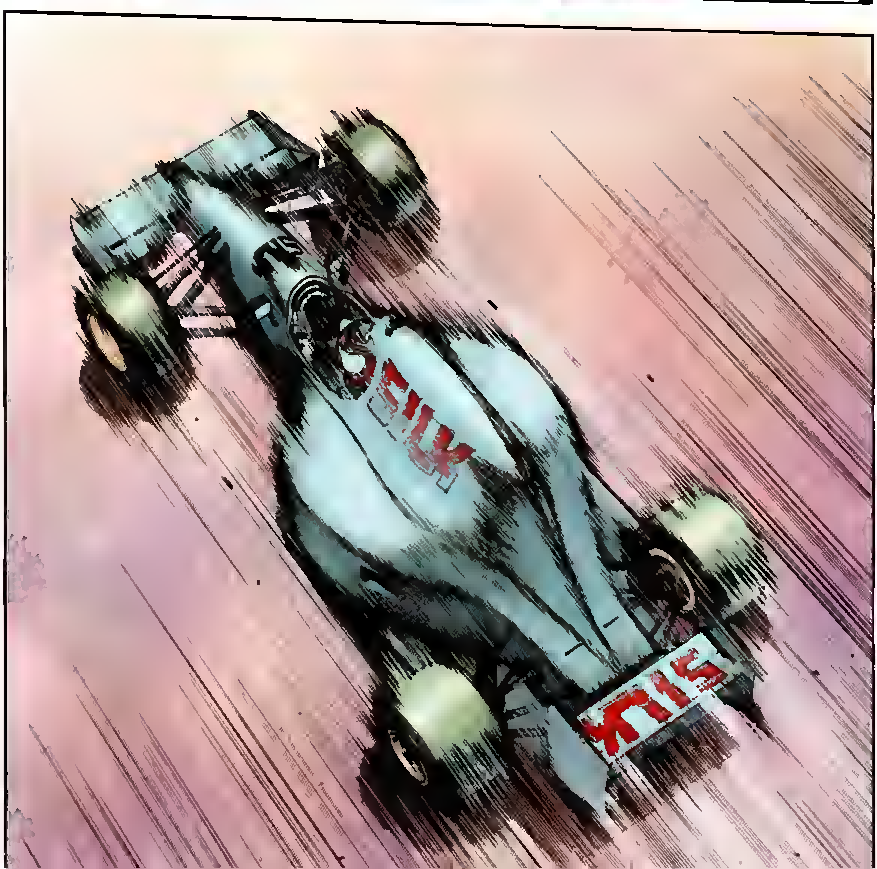
WORDS OF THE PROPHET

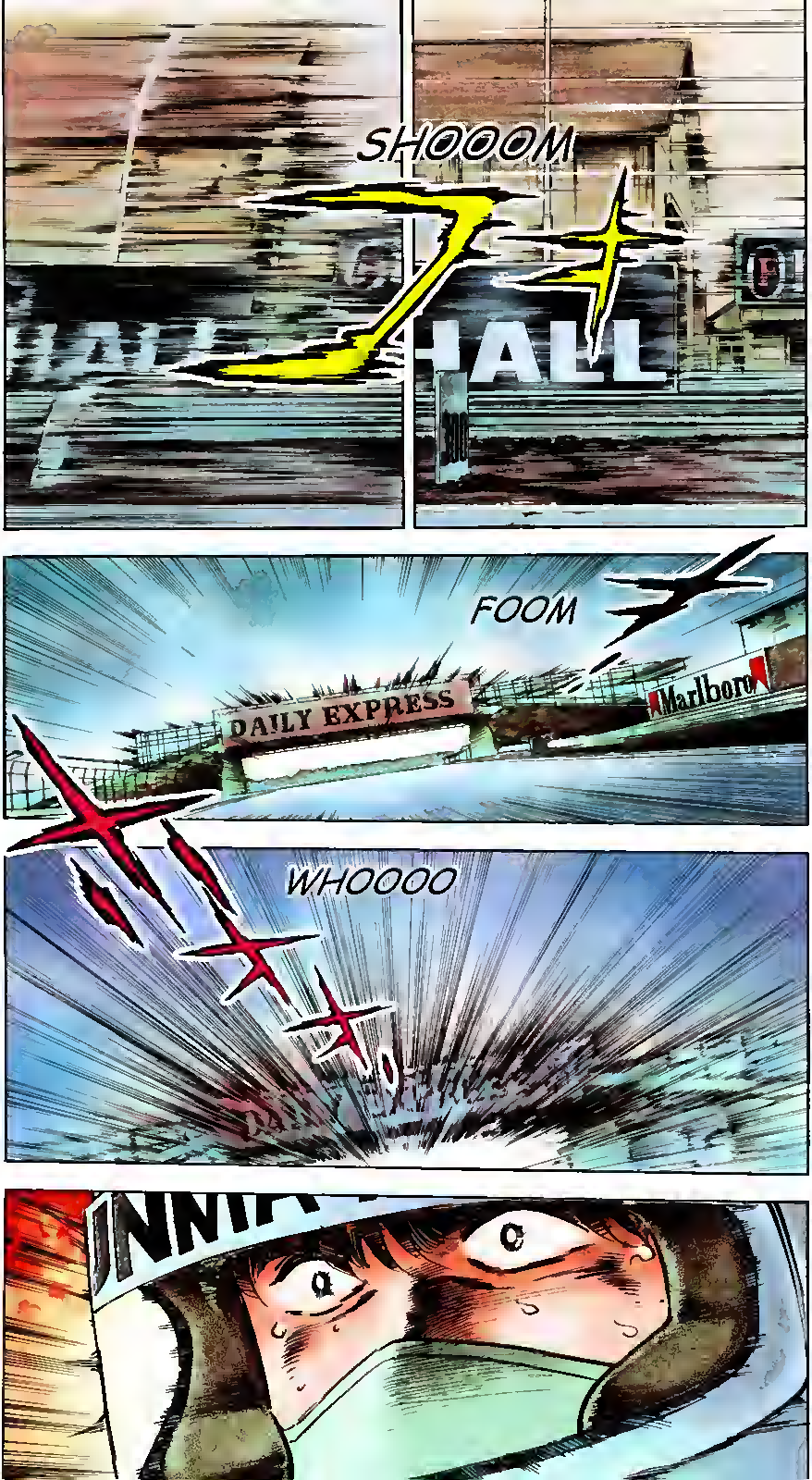
Chapter 1: The Tunnel
Chapter 2: With Child
Chapter 3: The Mountain Pass
Chapter 4: Angel's Ascent
Chapter 5: Uncertain
Chapter 6: Under the Sun
Chapter 7: Blood Struggle
Chapter 8: Rematch
Chapter 9: Sneering Shadow
Chapter 10: Diligence
Chapter 11: Words of the Prophet

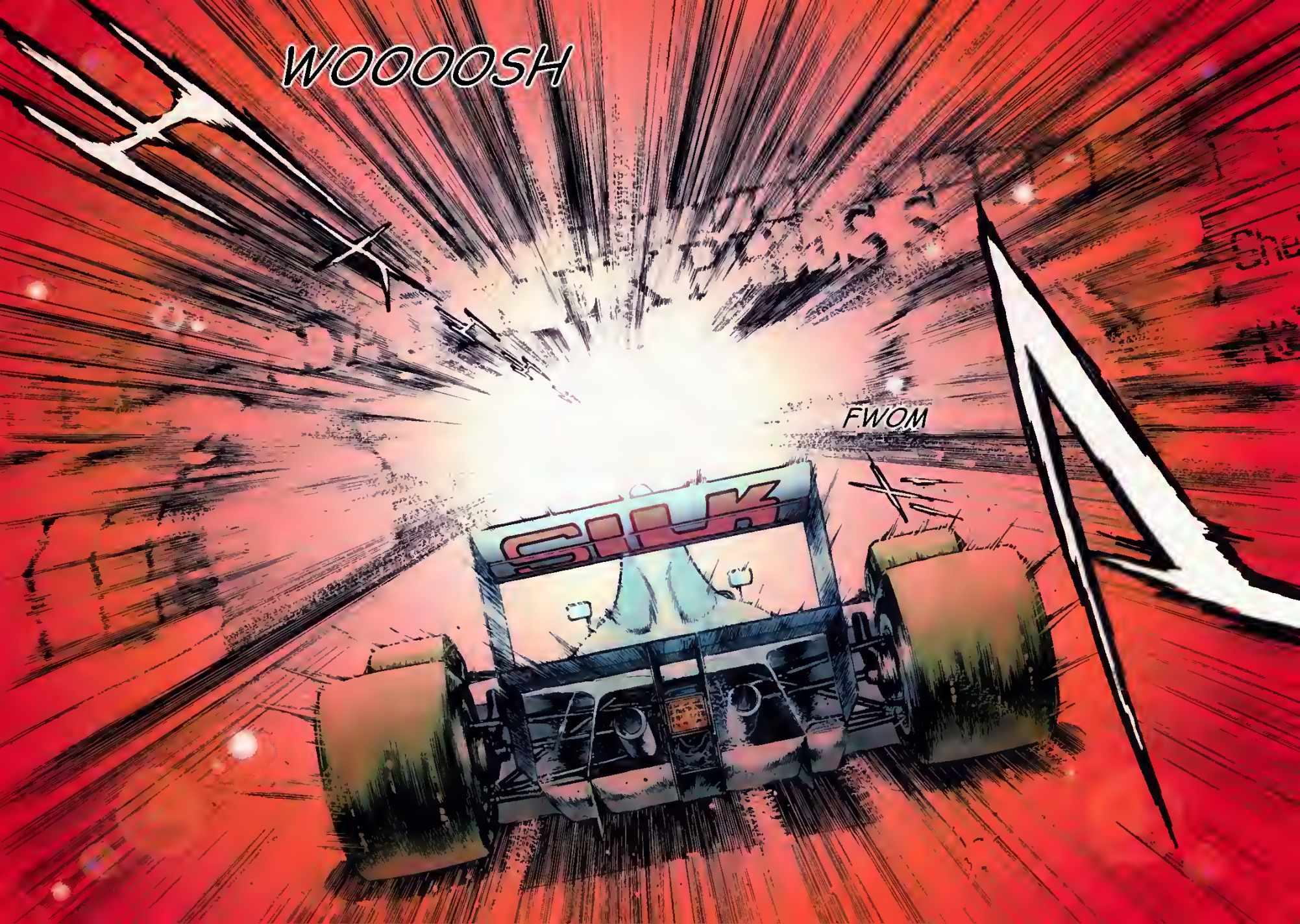

Chapter 1:
The Tunnel
BO
GUNMA AKAGI
TEAMB

F...
Fuh...
400... Km/h


BEEP
BEEP
400.0
km/h
BEEP
He did it...

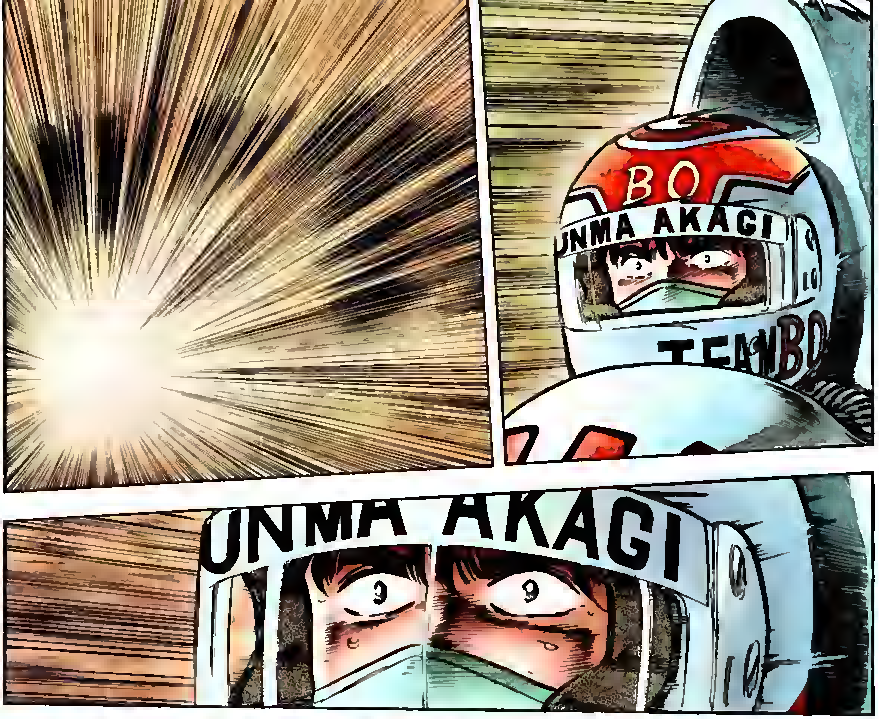

SELK
KNIS


SHOOOM
DAILY EXPRESS
Marlboro
FOOM
WHOOOO


WOOOOSH
FWOM
SILK

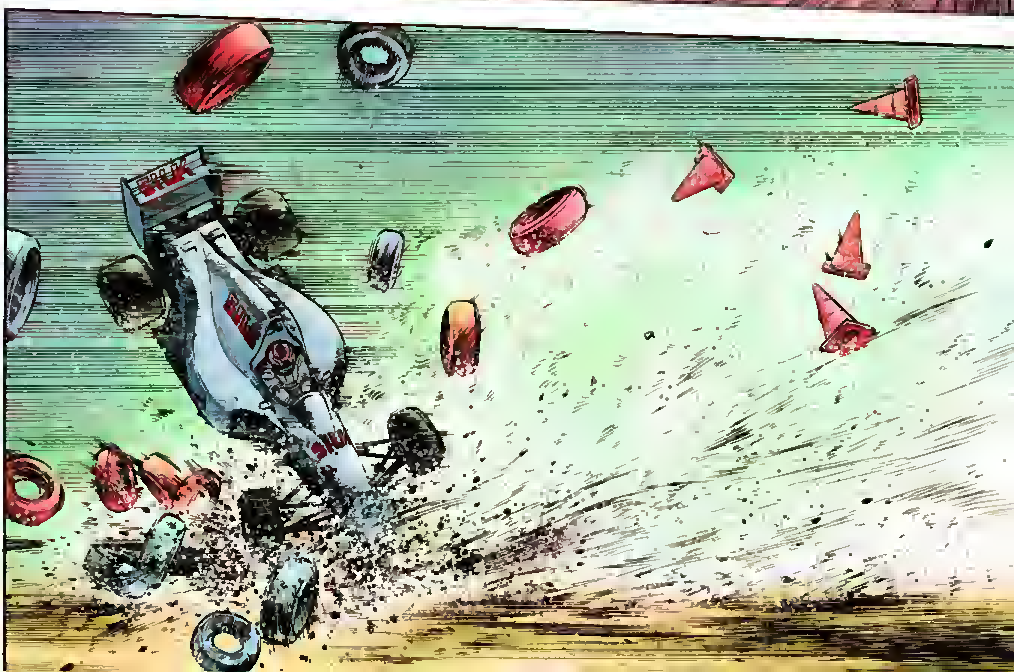
FWOM

WOOOOSH


UNMA AKAGI

Crap...
Gunma! Stop!
Hit the bra-kes!
SKRREEEEEE

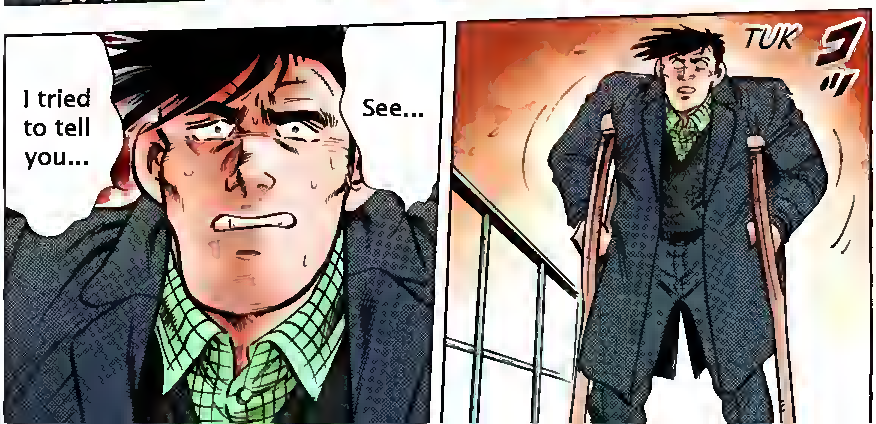
FWOOSH



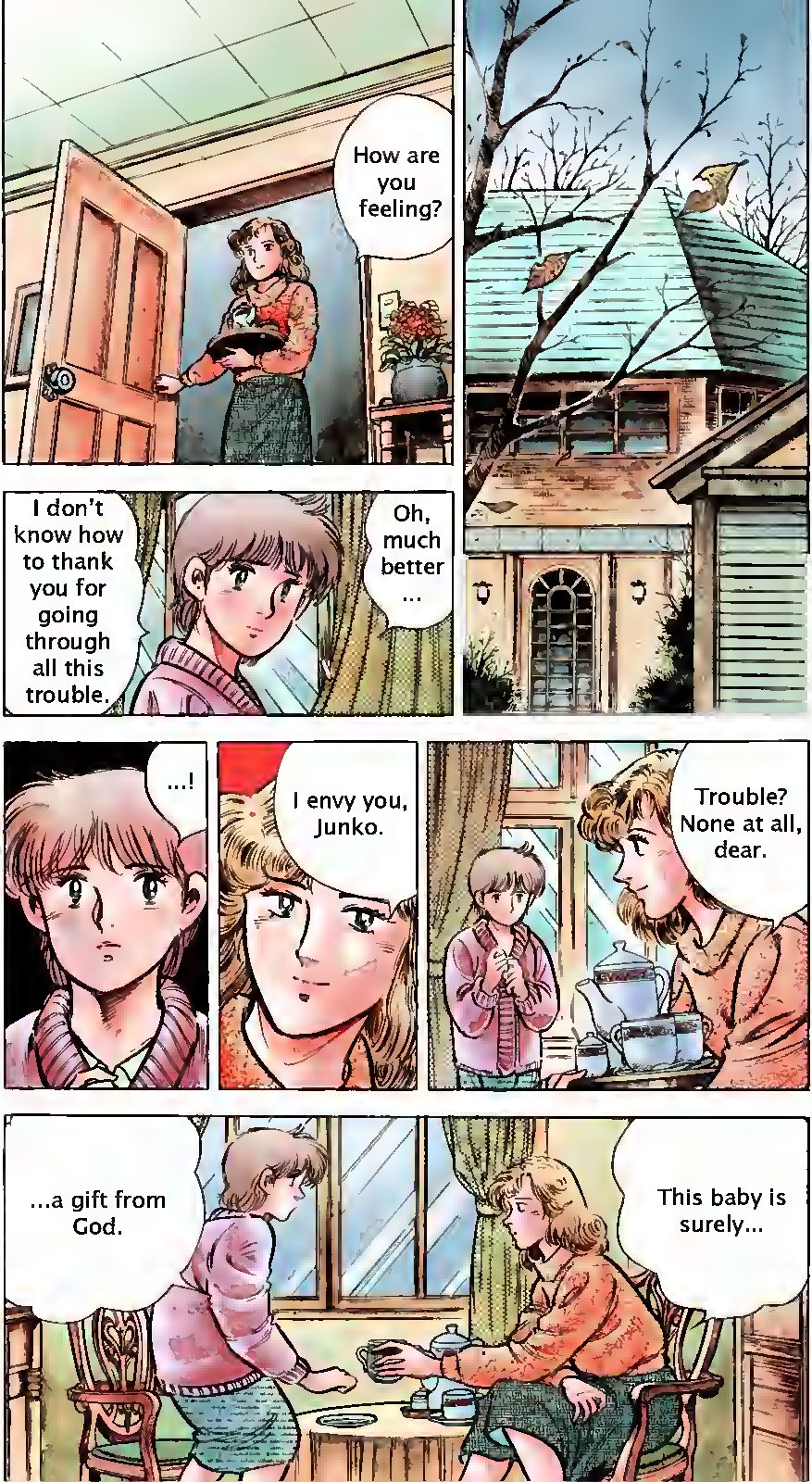
KRRSSHHH
SILK
SILK
BLAM
KRRR
GADUNK
SILK

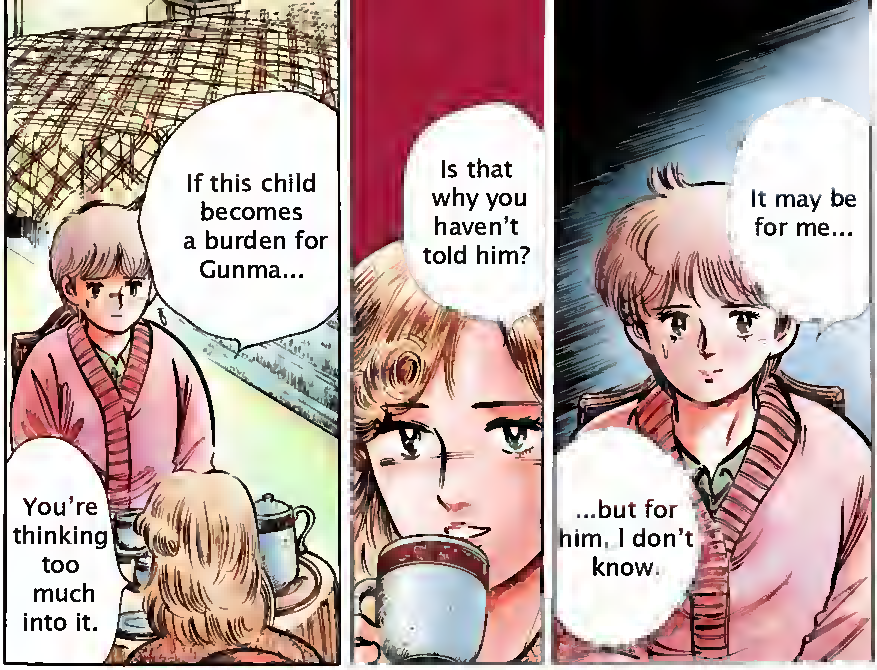
Shell
SSSSHHHHH
Gunma!

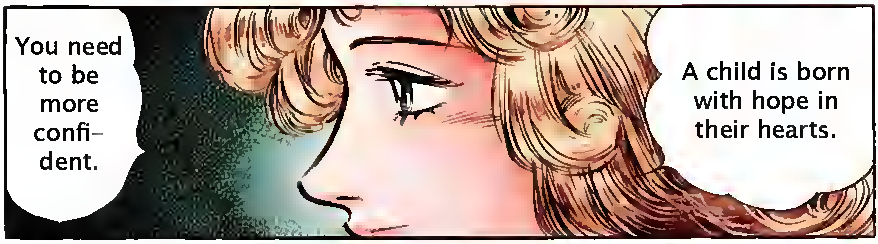
Gunma!
Idiot...
He just shot straight through the chicane!

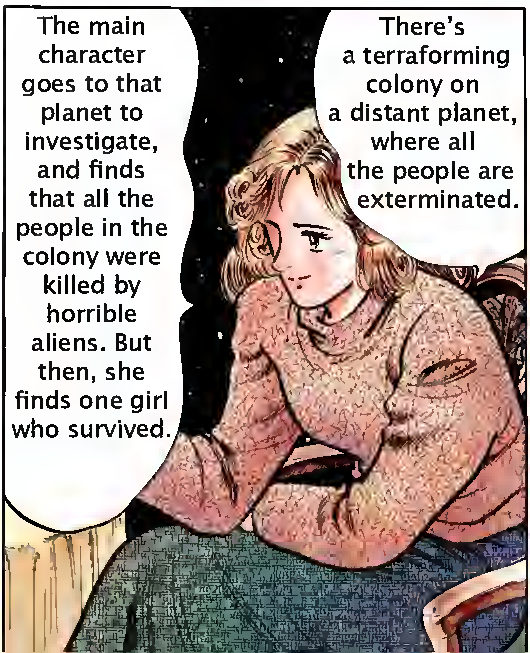

I tried to tell you...
See...
TUK

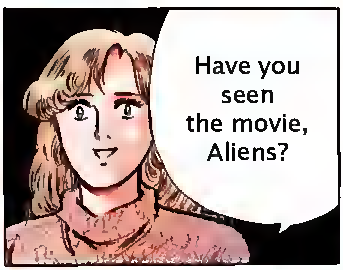
You are one lucky bastard. If you hadn't crashed through the fence, you woulda been a goner.
Gun-ma!
You all right, Gunma!?
Gunma...
Christ, what are you, insane!?
You freakin' did it.
You did it, Tamotsu ...
...
...is one hell of a beast.
This car...

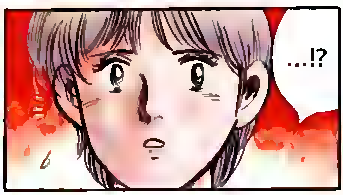

How are you feeling?
I don't know how to thank you for going through all this trouble.
Oh, much better ...
...!
I envy you, Junko.
Trouble? None at all, dear.
...a gift from God.
This baby is surely...

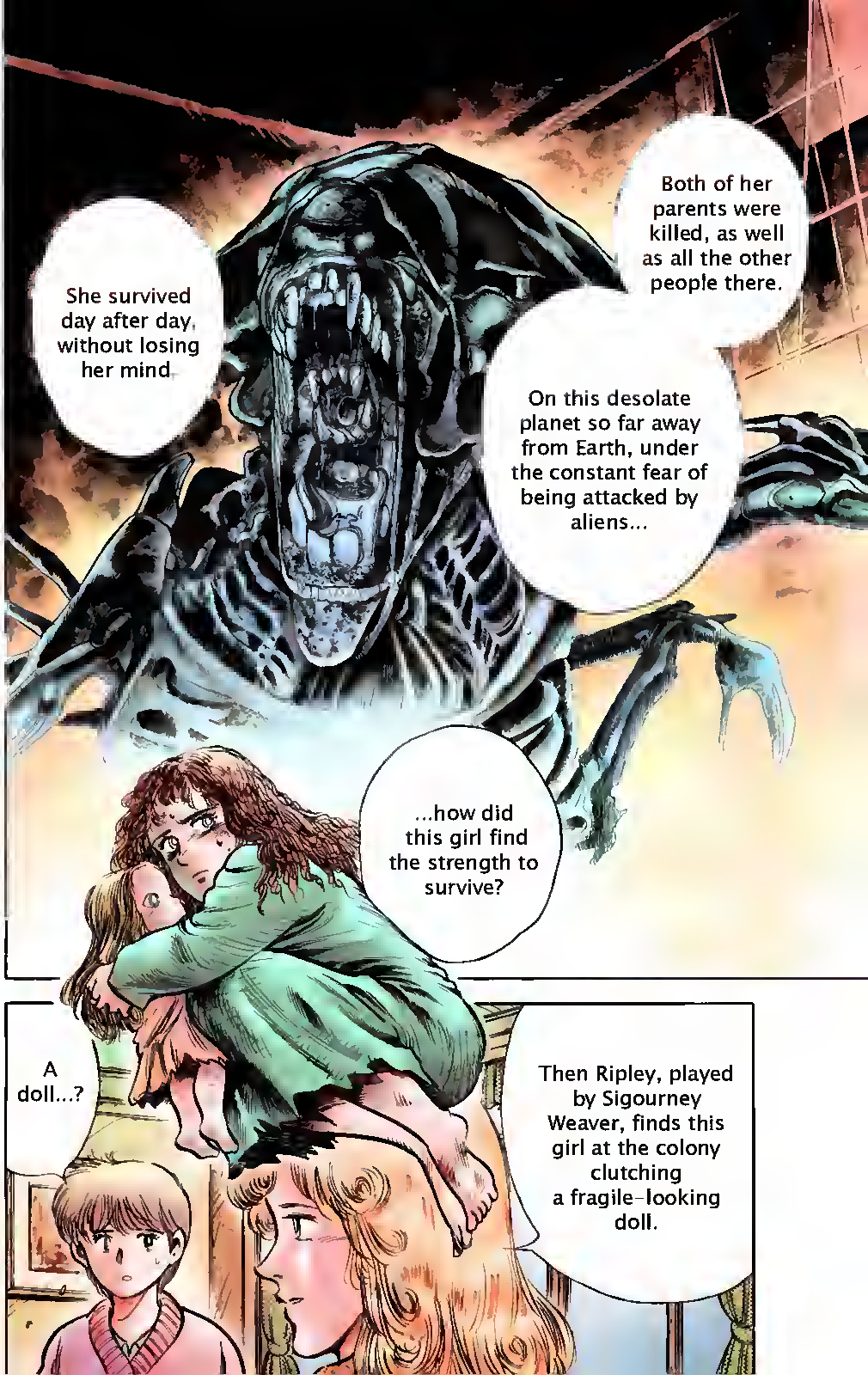

If this child becomes a burden for Gunma...
You're thinking too much into it.
Is that why you haven't told him?
It may be for me...
...but for him, I don't know.


You need to be more confi-dent.
A child is born with hope in their hearts.


The main character goes to that planet to investigate, and finds that all the people in the colony were killed by horrible aliens. But then, she finds one girl who survived.
There's a terraforming colony on a distant planet, where all the people are exterminated.


Have you seen the movie, Aliens?


...!?


She survived day after day, without losing her mind.
Both of her parents were killed, as well as all the other people there.
On this desolate planet so far away from Earth, under the constant fear of being attacked by aliens...
...how did this girl find the strength to survive?
A doll...?
Then Ripley, played by Sigourney Weaver, finds this girl at the colony clutching a fragile-looking doll.

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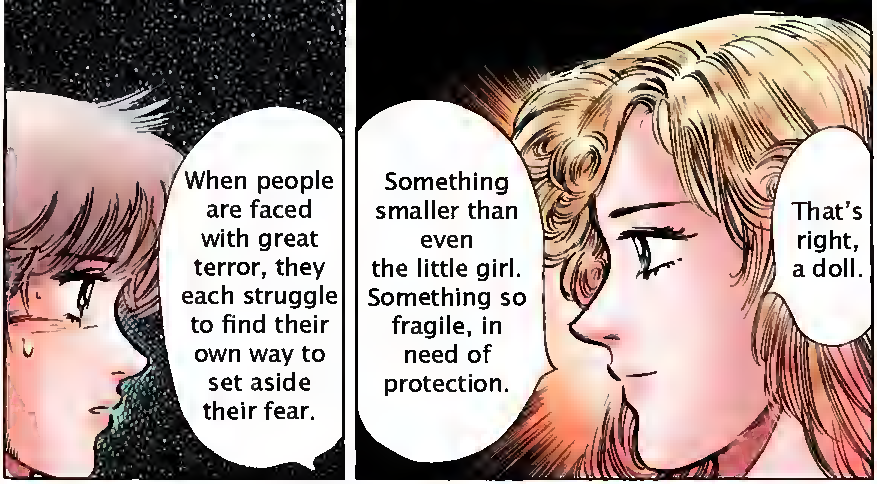
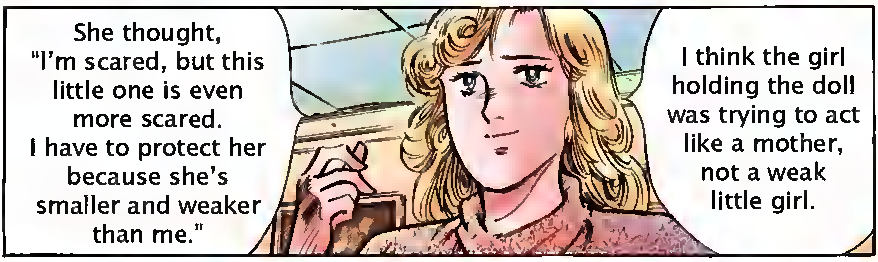
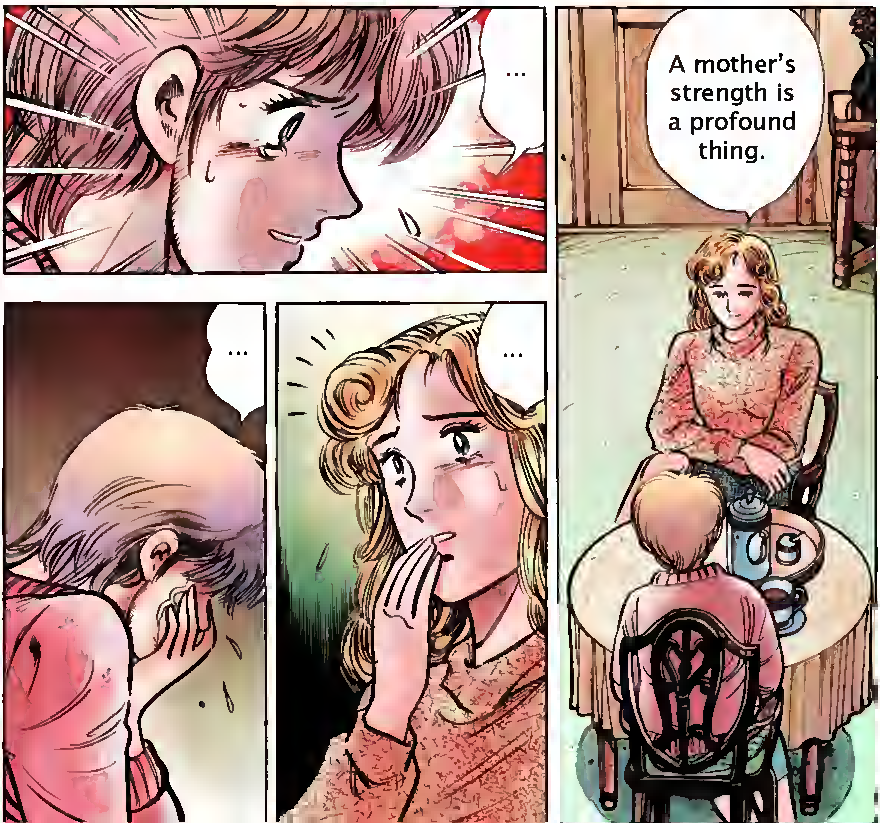
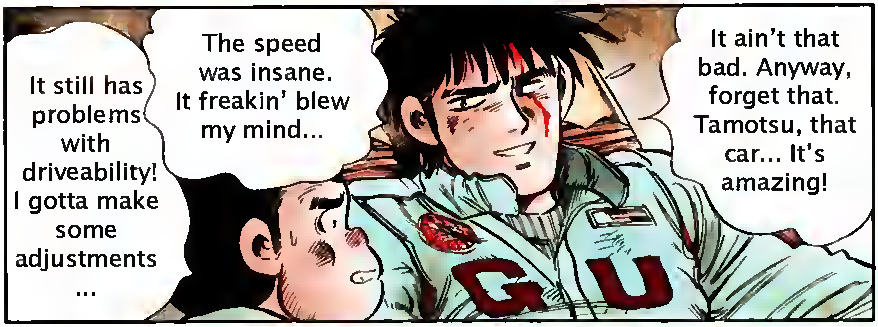
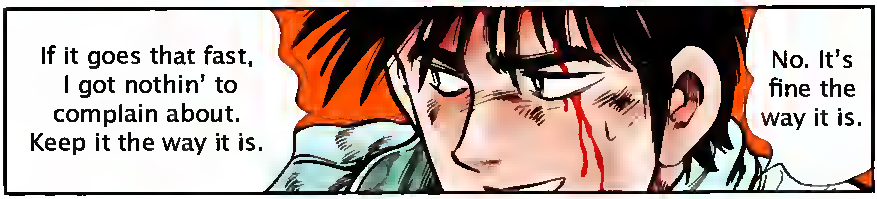

When people are faced with great terror, they each struggle to find their own way to set aside their fear.
Something smaller than even the little girl. Something so fragile, in need of protection.
That's right, a doll.


She thought, "I'm scared, but this little one is even more scared. I have to protect her because she's smaller and weaker than me."
I think the girl holding the doll was trying to act like a mother, not a weak little girl.


...
...
...
A mother's strength is a profound thing.

Damn it, Gunma! What were you tryin' to pull out there?
Just twisted my ankle a bit... That's all. Ow ow...
You should get exami-ned.
Yeah... I'm fine.
You all right!?


It still has problems with driveability! I gotta make some adjustments ...
The speed was insane. It freakin' blew my mind...
It ain't that bad. Anyway, forget that. Tamotsu, that car... It's amazing!


If it goes that fast, I got nothin' to complain about. Keep it the way it is.
No. It's fine the way it is.

...that close to gettin' through that tunnel.
I was finally ...
Gunma, that's just crazy...

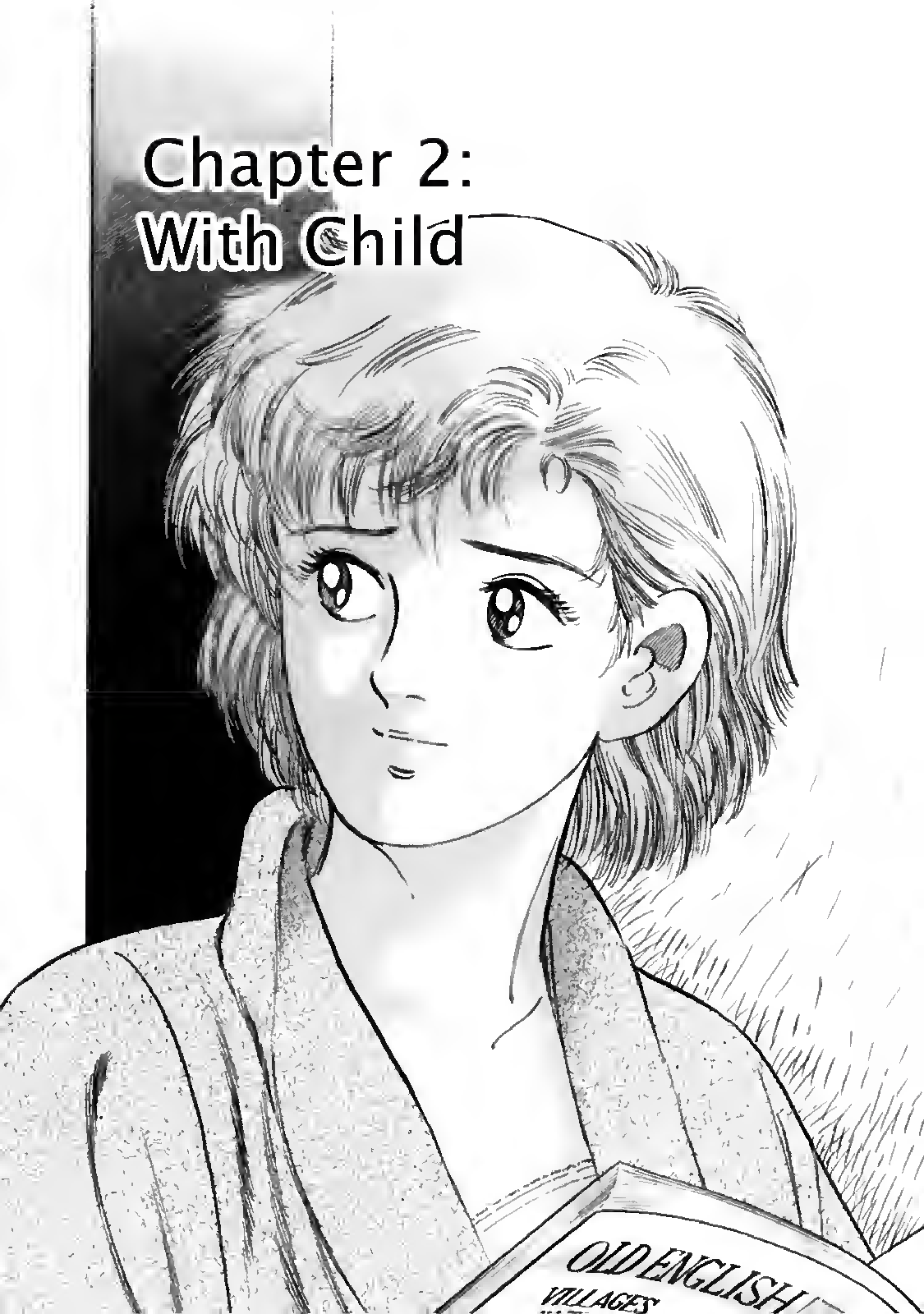
That tunnel... That gray tunnel...
What tunnel?
And then what?
HEH HEH HEH
Heh... Heh heh... With this beast, I could even pass that black shadow, no doubt... Heh heh...
That's right... With this car, I can pass that shadow, and go through the tunnel... And then...
Freedom from what!?
Freedom!
Say it, Gunma. What!?
What's at the other end, huh!?

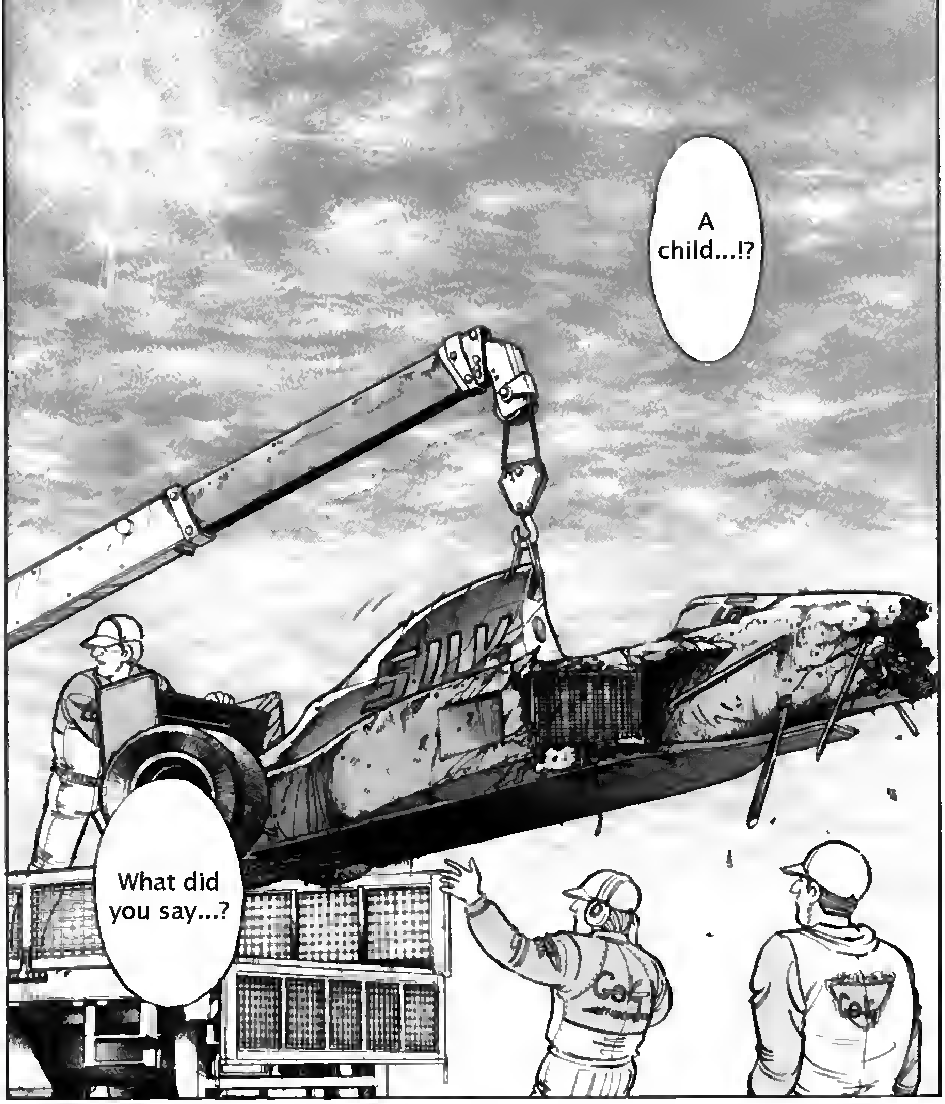
Heh.
How con-
venient.
W...Well,
from
a bunch of
stuff!
Like... from
myself. All
the stuff
I'm tangled
up in...

Whoa,
Kuroi...
Hold
it...
No matter
how much
you try to
fight it,
humans are
humans...
And as
proof...
...I was
told to
keep this
a secret,
but...
I'll tell you
this right
now. People
don't get to
become
angels!
Like some
freakin'
angel? How
convenient
for you!
You wanna get
off easy, is that
it? Huh!? You
wanna float up to
heaven by
yourself?
What
the hell,
Kuroi...?

...
...!
There's
another
human
child...
...
inside
Junko!

Chapter 2:
With Child

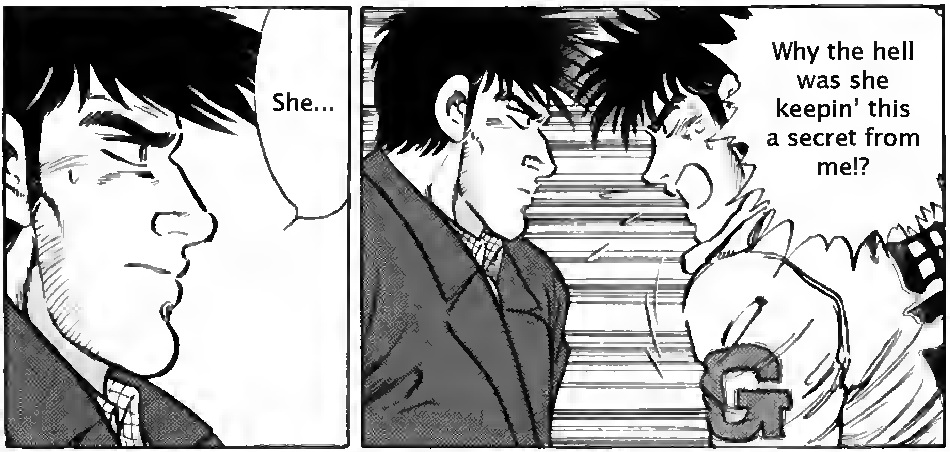


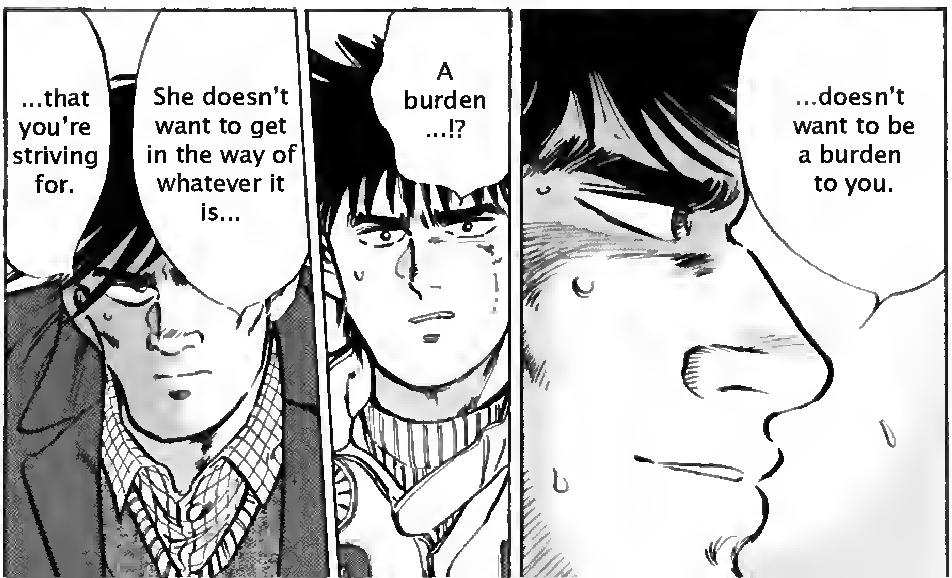

A child...!?
What did you say...?

...I don't think I heard you right...
Say it again...

I'll say it as many times as you like.
...with your child!
Junko's pregnant...
That's right!
P... P... Pregnant...
G...Gunma... Urgh... I'm so... happy... for you...
How ...
DADUM

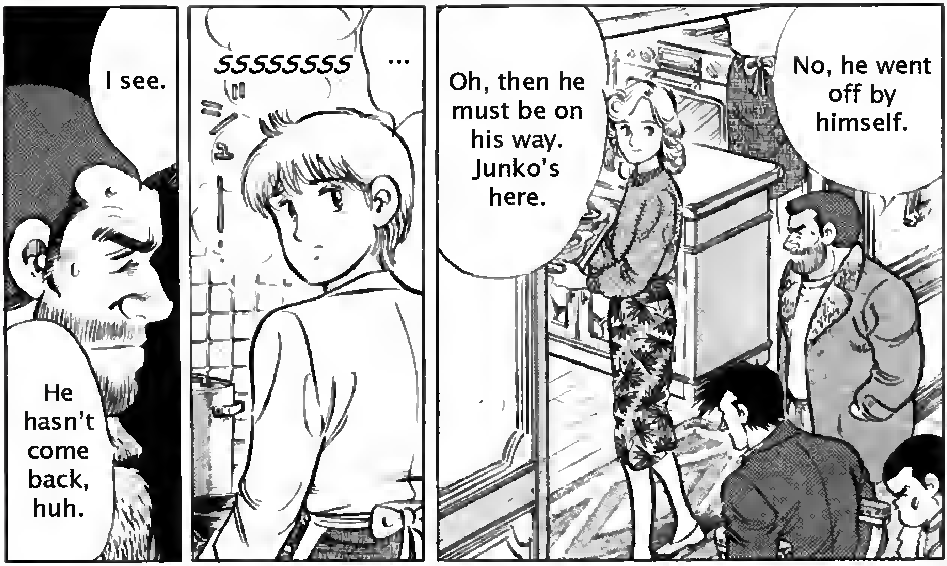
You just said that, didn't you!?
She told you to keep it a secret!?
Gunma, listen... It's just...
How the hell did you find out?
Junko ain't told me nothin'!


She...
Why the hell was she keepin' this a secret from me!?


...that you're striving for.
She doesn't want to get in the way of whatever it is...
A burden ...!?
...doesn't want to be a burden to you.

...
DASH
Gunma!
...
I guess it just felt...
I don't know.
Why did you say it? She told us to keep it a secret.
Tragic, huh?
...too tragic.

Where's Gunma?
Wasn't he with you?


I see.
He hasn't come back, huh.
SSSSSSSS ...
Oh, then he must be on his way. Junko's here.
No, he went off by himself.

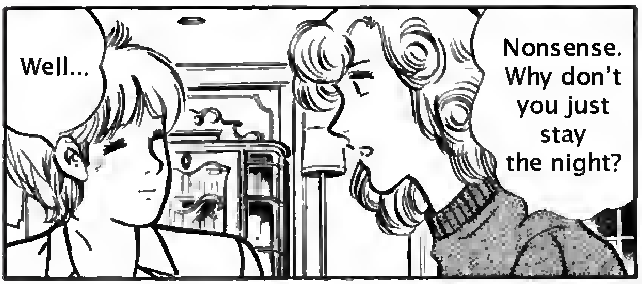
It's nothing. Just some minor trouble.
No...
Why, what happened?

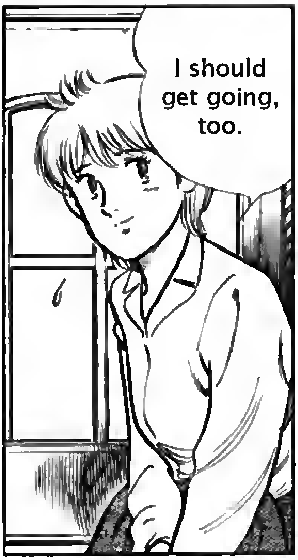
They were acting really strange... Maybe the test didn't go well?
If I try to increase the downforce just one bit, or try to make it just a little safer for the corners...
That car is as powerful as it is because I shaved off every bit of air resistance I could.
Hey Tamotsu... Can't you make that thing a little safer to drive?
We just can't have it both ways, huh.
...its power would plummet and it would be reduced to another third-rate car.
...but I think the car's fine the way it is.
I don't wanna sound cold-hearted ...
Man, what a car indeed.

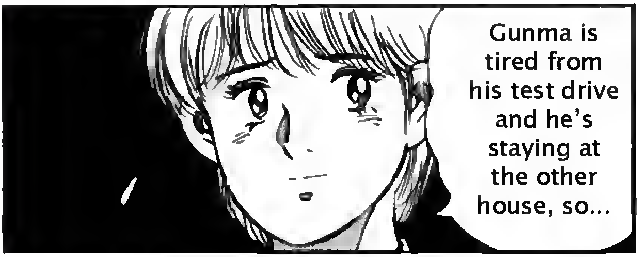
No matter how far civilization progresses, humans will never become unnecessary.
...the man must make up for what the machine lacks. Man and machine must cooperate.
Machines are imperfect. They break, and they stray from their intended purpose. It's part of what it means to be a machine!
People have been risking their lives for these tools we call machines for as long as we've had them.
There's no such thing as a perfect machine.
In other words...
So you want Gunma...
That's why humans have always been there to control them!
All I've done ...
He's a genius, but... whether or not he can learn to control it is up to him...
You think he CAN control it?
...to take control of that car?

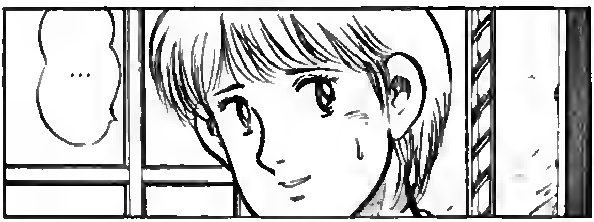
Hey... How 'bout we get some grub...?
SLUMP
...that Gunma threw at me!
...is passed back the ball...
And if Tamotsu knew about Junko's pregnancy...
If you hadn't said it, I probably would have at some point.
Hey, Orman.
I'm thinking... Maybe I should have kept my mouth shut.
...
PAT
...to tell Gunma about it.
...I'm willing to bet he'd be the first...

Why don't you guys come inside?
Hey, where's Tamotsu?


Well...
Nonsense. Why don't you just stay the night?


I should get going, too.


Gunma is tired from his test drive and he's staying at the other house, so...

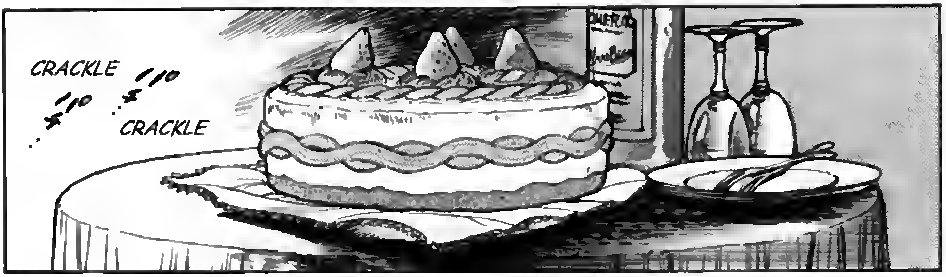

...

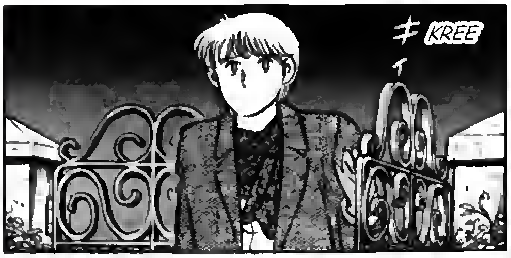
...
Oh, well, of course. Just wait a second so I can pack you guys some food to take home.

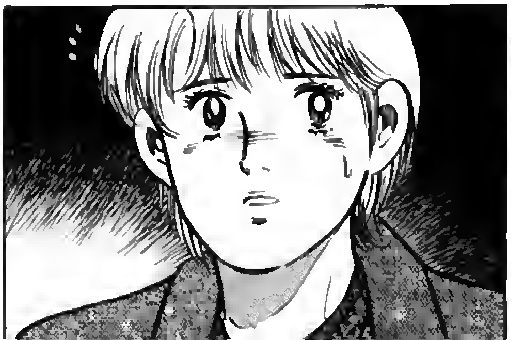
...
...?

Gasp!
Junko's not gonna be happy...
...when she finds out we told Gunma that she's pregnant.
Will Gunma...
... continue to race?
...
...race on that flying beast in pursuit of that black shadow...?
...will he still...
While knowing that his beloved is carrying his child...
Do we have anything stronger than beer, Anna?

CRACKLE
CRACKLE
CRACKLE


CRACKLE
CRACKLE


KREE



I brought you dinner. You haven't eaten yet, have you?
I'll get it ready right n...
KACHUK
Sorry I came home so late.
I assumed you would stop by Orman's house.
Come over here, Junko.
Is some-thing wrong, Gun-ma?
Did your test drive go okay...?
SLICE
SWF

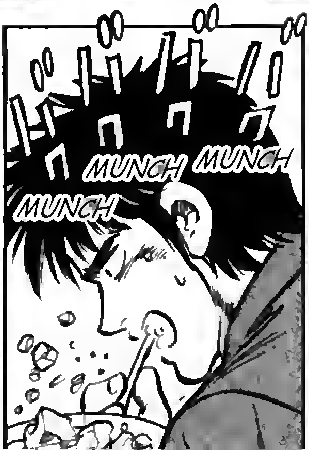
I got wine, too.
Have some cake with me.
Uhh, Gunma?

Did you buy this cake?
What's this for?

FROAR
CRACKLE
CRACKLE
CRACKLE

Happy zeroth birthday to our baby!

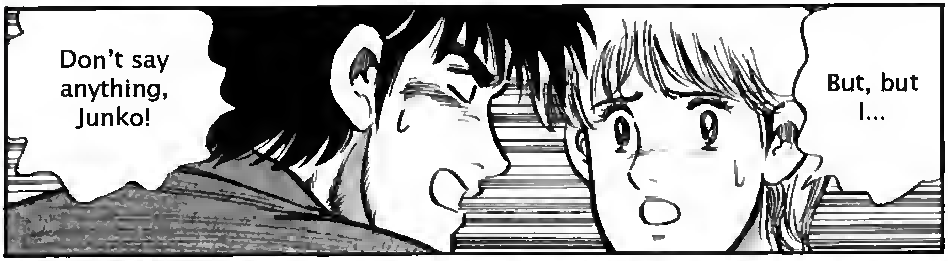
...


MUNCH MUNCH
MUNCH

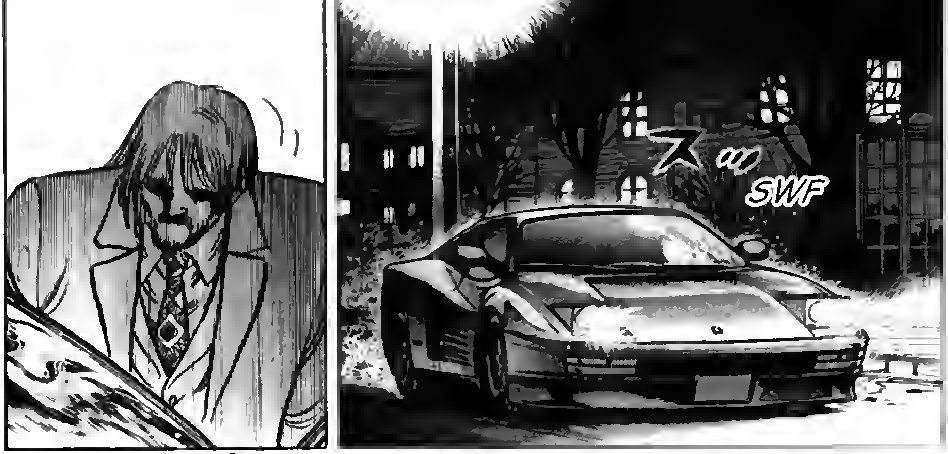
...
What're you waiting for? Eat up, Junko!
I'm not going to be a burden to you.
NOD
I said, eat!
MUNCH
MUNCH
MUNCH

...
Did you know that?
GULUL
Kuroi's got ten kids of his own...
...
GLUG GLUG
Ten kids! That's just great... Hah...
Ten kids. Think about that.
Never would have guessed, would you?
It's fine. I want to.
You don't have to do this, Gunma...
...let's fly back to Japan. Together. We'll take care of the family register.
Tomor-row...

Every-thing's gonna be all right! Don't you worry about a thing!
It's going to be fine! Just fine!
If you're going to think of this child as a heavy burden, then I don't want to...
I have my own dreams, too.

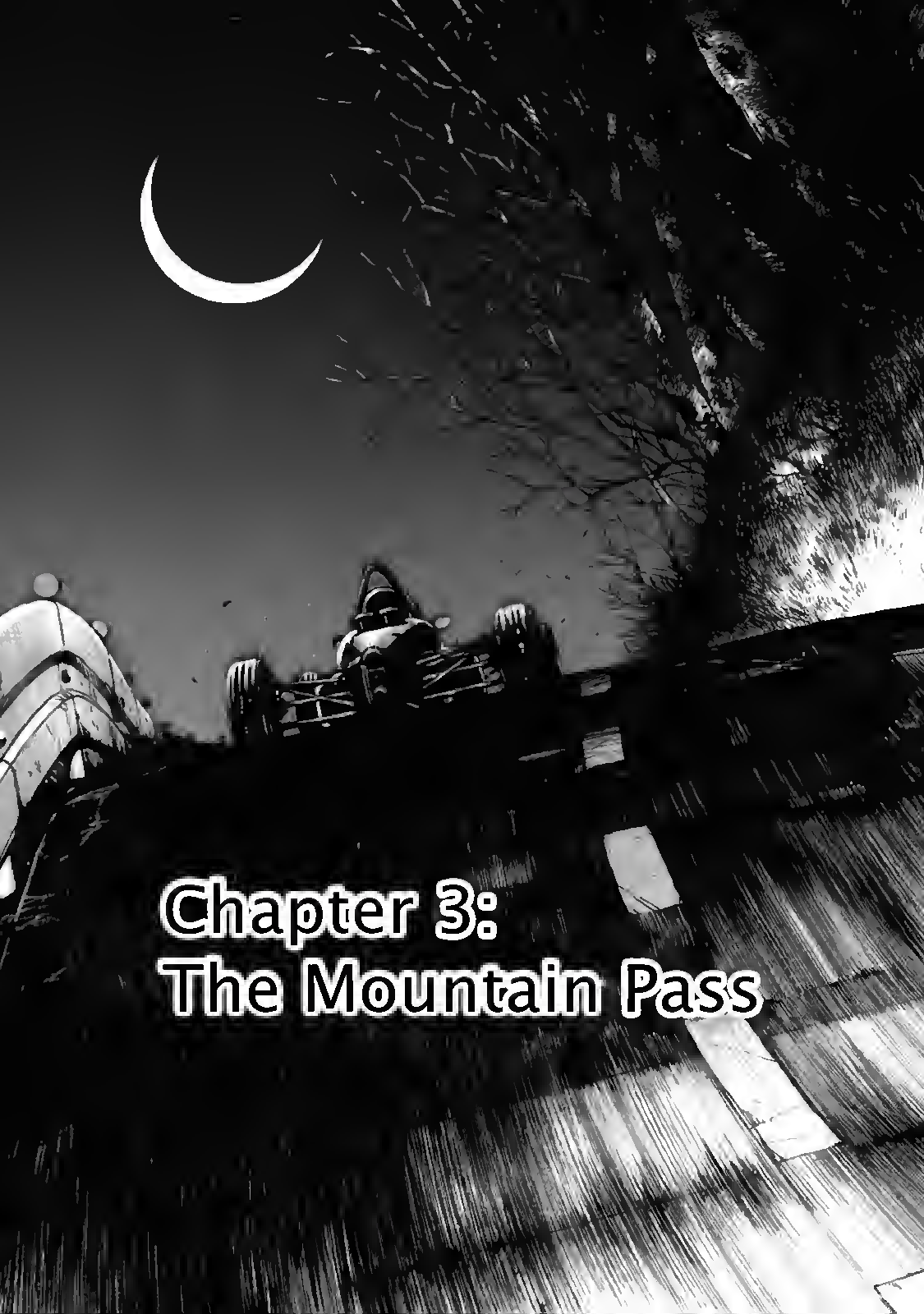

Don't say anything, Junko!
But, but I...

...any-thing...
Don't say...


SWF

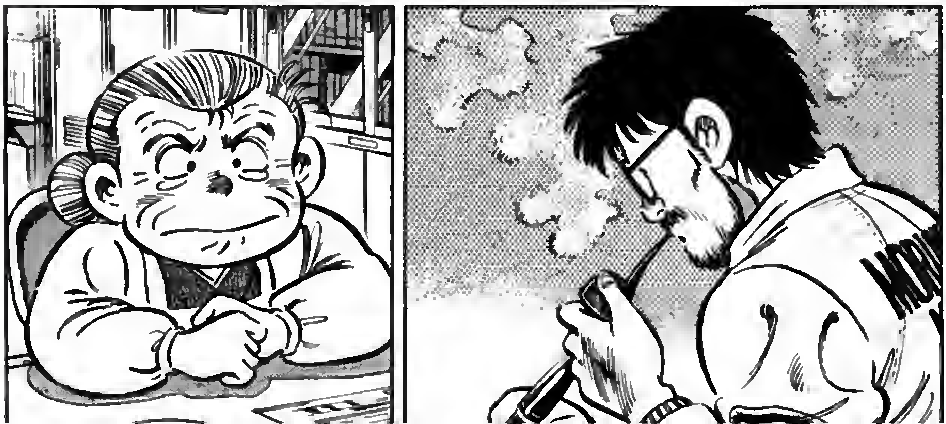
KACHUK

MY GOD.....

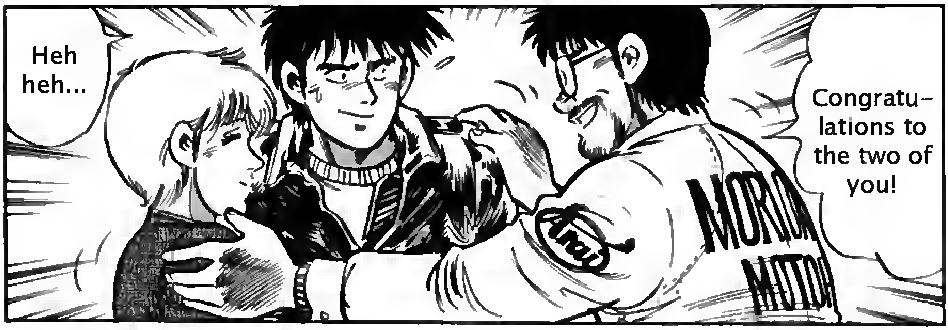

Chapter 3:
The Mountain Pass

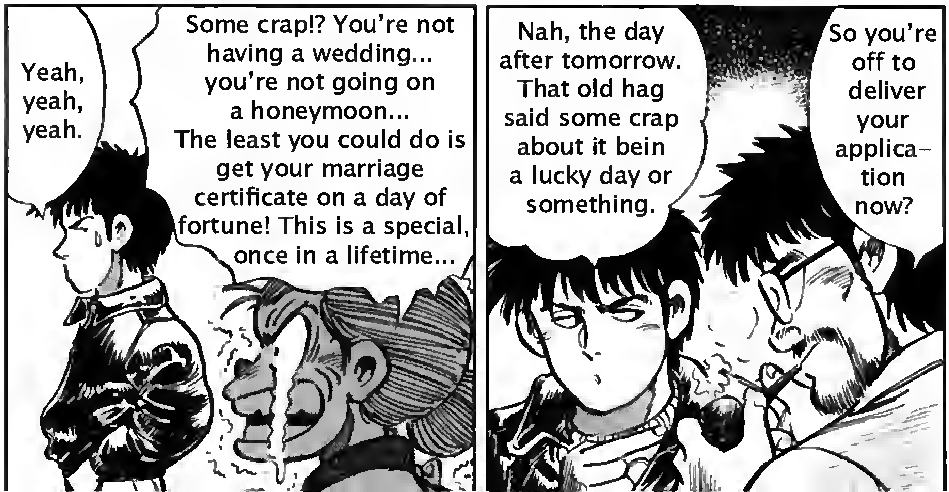
In order to get a marriage certificate, we need about two witnesses.
I was thinking I would ask Granny...
...and Morioka to be witnesses!

What about a wedding?
Let's keep that on hold until later. We'll have one eventually.
As for a honeymoon, keep in mind we've been traveling nonstop for the last however many years...

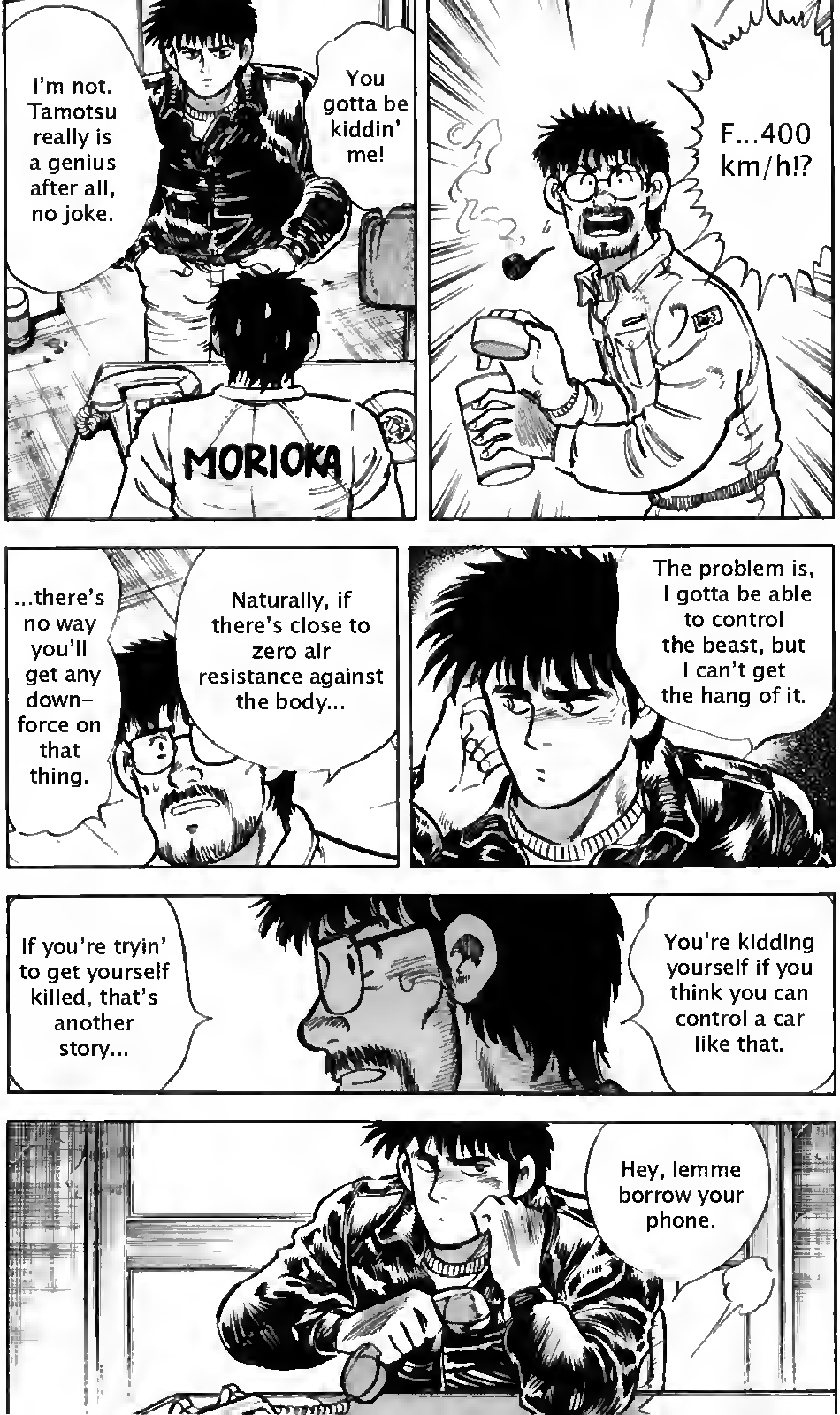


Don't even worry about it. I'm real happy for you two!
Thank you so much.
All right... Here it is...
Thanks, man.


Heh heh...
Congratulations to the two of you!
MORIOKA MOTOR

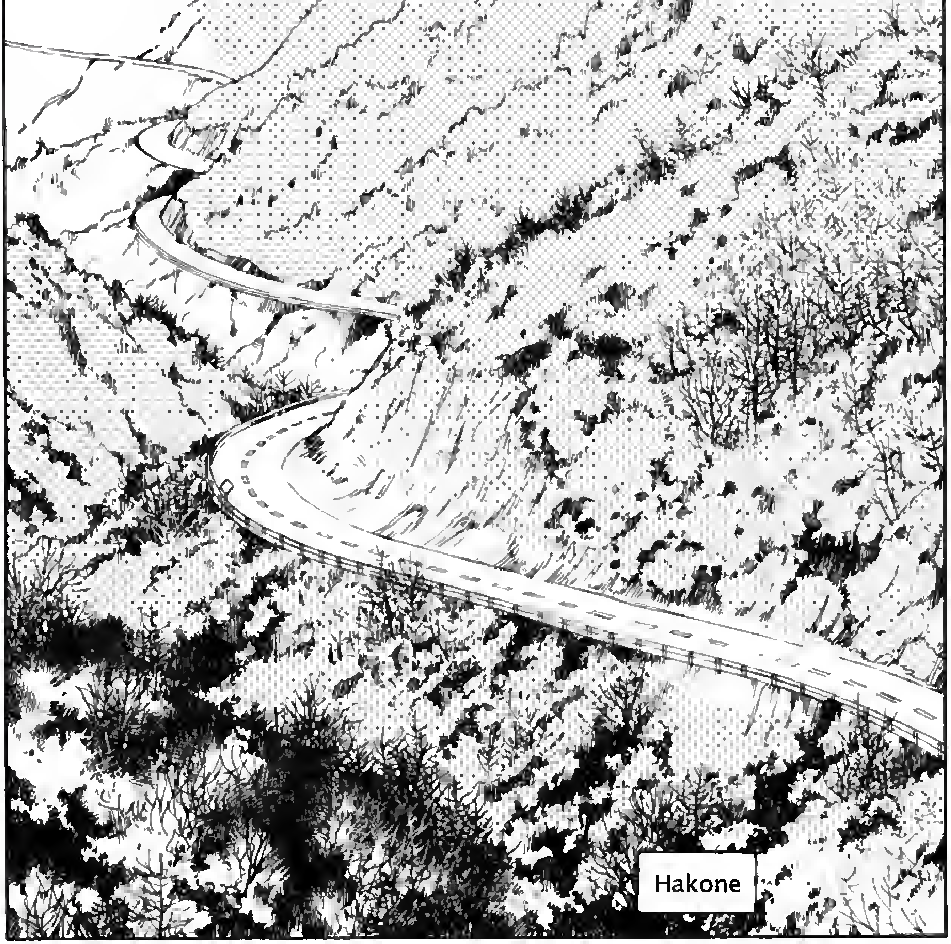

Yeah, yeah, yeah.
Some crap!? You're not having a wedding... you're not going on a honeymoon... The least you could do is get your marriage certificate on a day of fortune! This is a special, once in a lifetime...
Nah, the day after tomorrow. That old hag said some crap about it bein a lucky day or something.
So you're off to deliver your application now?

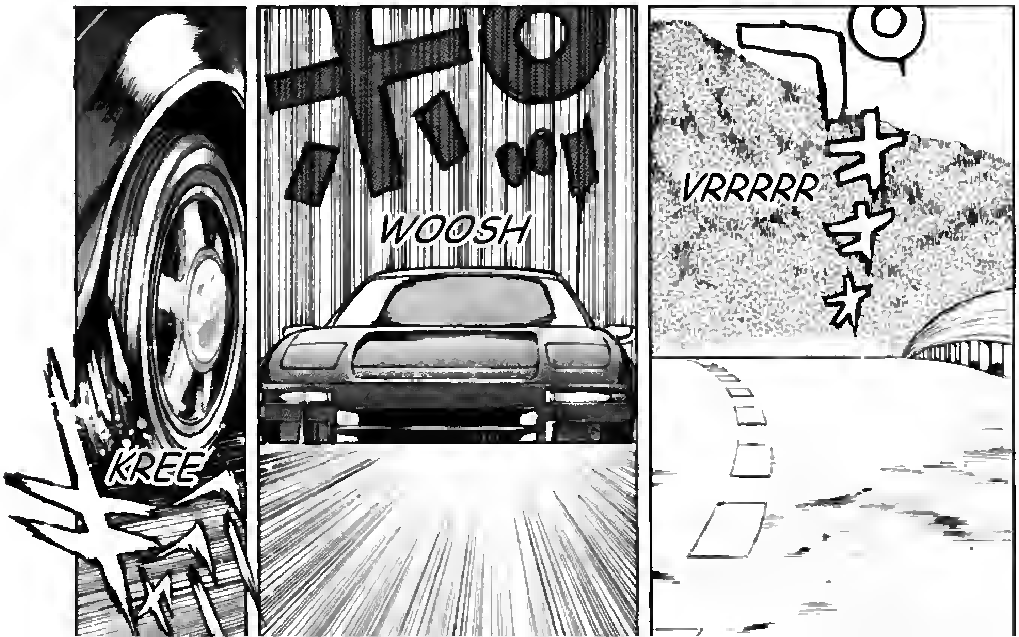
Tonight, we're having a party! A party for the newly-weds, you hear? You're coming too, Mr. Morioka!
O-kay.
Go on back, Junko. I wanna have a chat with Morioka for a bit.
Yeah ...
Have a wed-ding, at least.
...
I'm not in the right zone mentally.
We will. But now's not the best time.
Whoa, that's not like you to say that.
The problem is the guy operating the thing.
No. The car is freakin' awesome.
What, you aren't satisfied with your car?

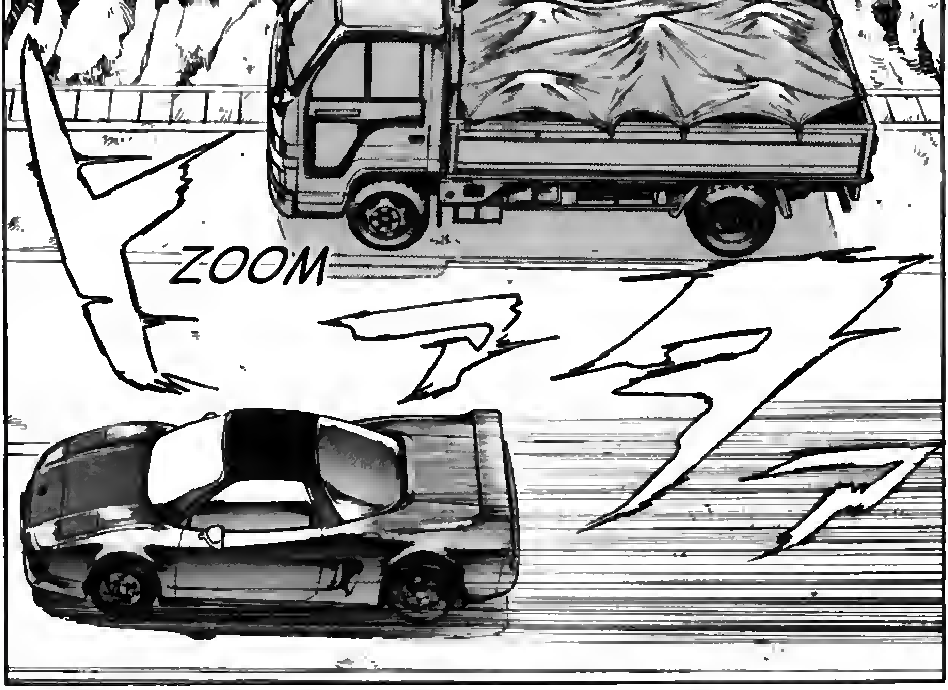

I'm not. Tamotsu really is a genius after all, no joke.
You gotta be kiddin' me!
MORIOKA
F...400 km/h!?
...there's no way you'll get any down-force on that thing.
Naturally, if there's close to zero air resistance against the body...
The problem is, I gotta be able to control the beast, but I can't get the hang of it.
If you're tryin' to get yourself killed, that's another story...
You're kidding yourself if you think you can control a car like that.
Hey, lemme borrow your phone.

...and then increased the aerodynamics with the paint he invented.
The engine alone barely has any power. Tamotsu tuned the engine to the limit...
Who are you gonna call, Gunma? You gonna ask Tamotsu to build you a more driveable car?
Don't be an idiot!
But you gotta have a little downforce man, or else...
That's not even on the table.
To try and make it easier to control would be to make it slower.
A racer... Right...
Dammit, I accidentally dialed the wrong number 'cause you won't shut up...
I'm a freakin' racer!
Listen, Morioka. I'm not some old geezer's wife fussing in the passenger's seat!

Hey Morioka, you mind if I borrow your truck?
My truck? Sure. I guess...
MORIOKA
Hello? It's me. Yeah. Long time.
Remember your promise? How's today sound? Yeah, like right now...
You got time? All right, cool.
See you in a bit.
ADVAN
oka Motors
This the right key?
I gotta go see an old friend for a bit.
Where are you goin' with it?
Hey, Gunma, come on...
I'll be running a bit late...
VRRR
Tell Granny to go ahead and start the party without me.
Then you don't have to take the truck, you can...
VRR
VRR


Hakone


KREE
WOOSH
VRRRRR


ZOOM

The road starts to freeze at night. We'll wait till then.
You got a lot of guys zippin' around aimlessly, like that guy.
This place is heaven for street racers.

I got a race car, don't I?
You still racing FJ?
Yeah. Right.
I wouldn't have imagined I'd ever get a call from you.
Heh heh. Thanks dude. Sorry for the trouble.

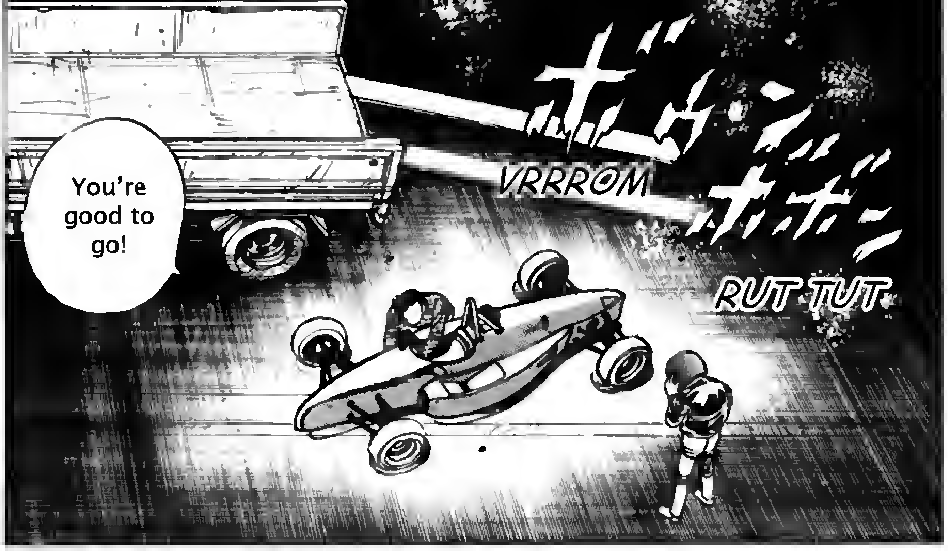
I just started to feel stale.
Hijiri bit the dust, and then you rose up from FJ...
But racing is just a hobby for me these days. A sort of pastime, I guess.

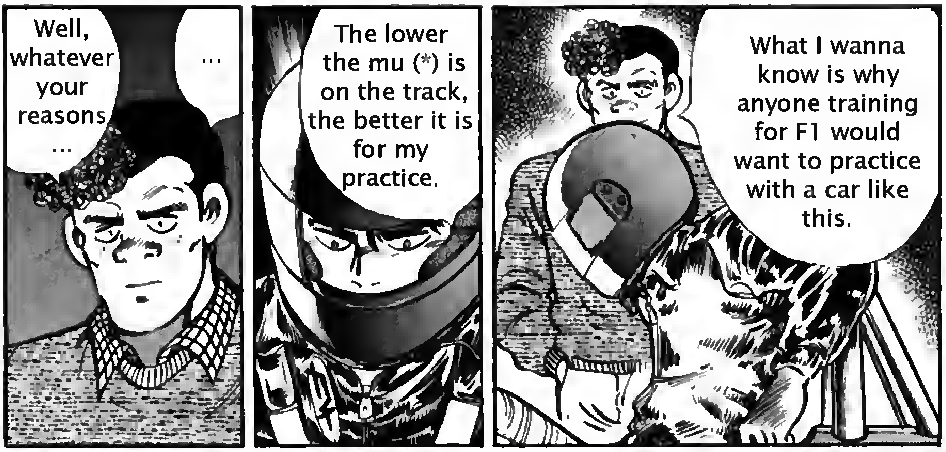
Ha ha ha...
We threw shoes at each other mid-race. How could I forget?
...of you to remember me.
But it was nice...
POOF

I remember thinking the same... That dumbass, Sunai...
I remember thinking what an asshole you were!
Then we stopped our cars in the middle of the circuit and brawled...

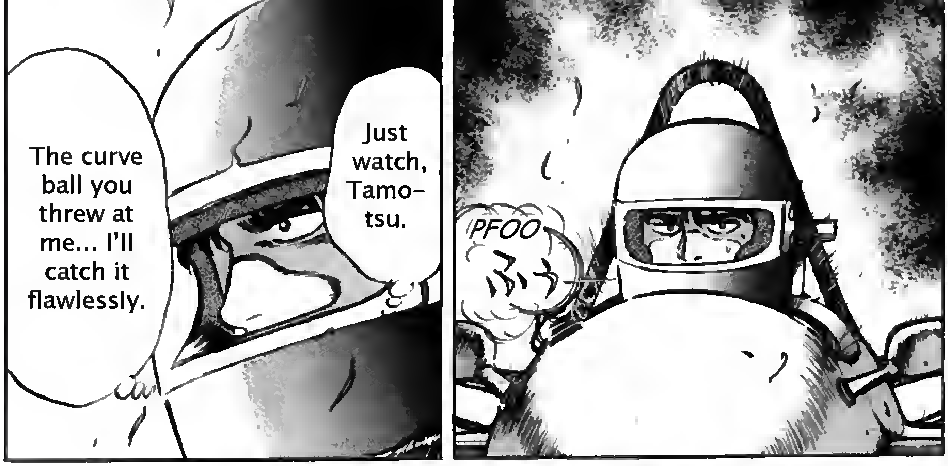
Real good times...
Those were good times...
Ha ha ha ha!
BAM
BAM

No one drives through here once the sun sets.
This should be good spot to let you off.
FLAP
Not even the cops!
VROOH




Well, whatever your reasons ...
...
The lower the mu (*) is on the track, the better it is for my practice.
What I wanna know is why anyone training for F1 would want to practice with a car like this.

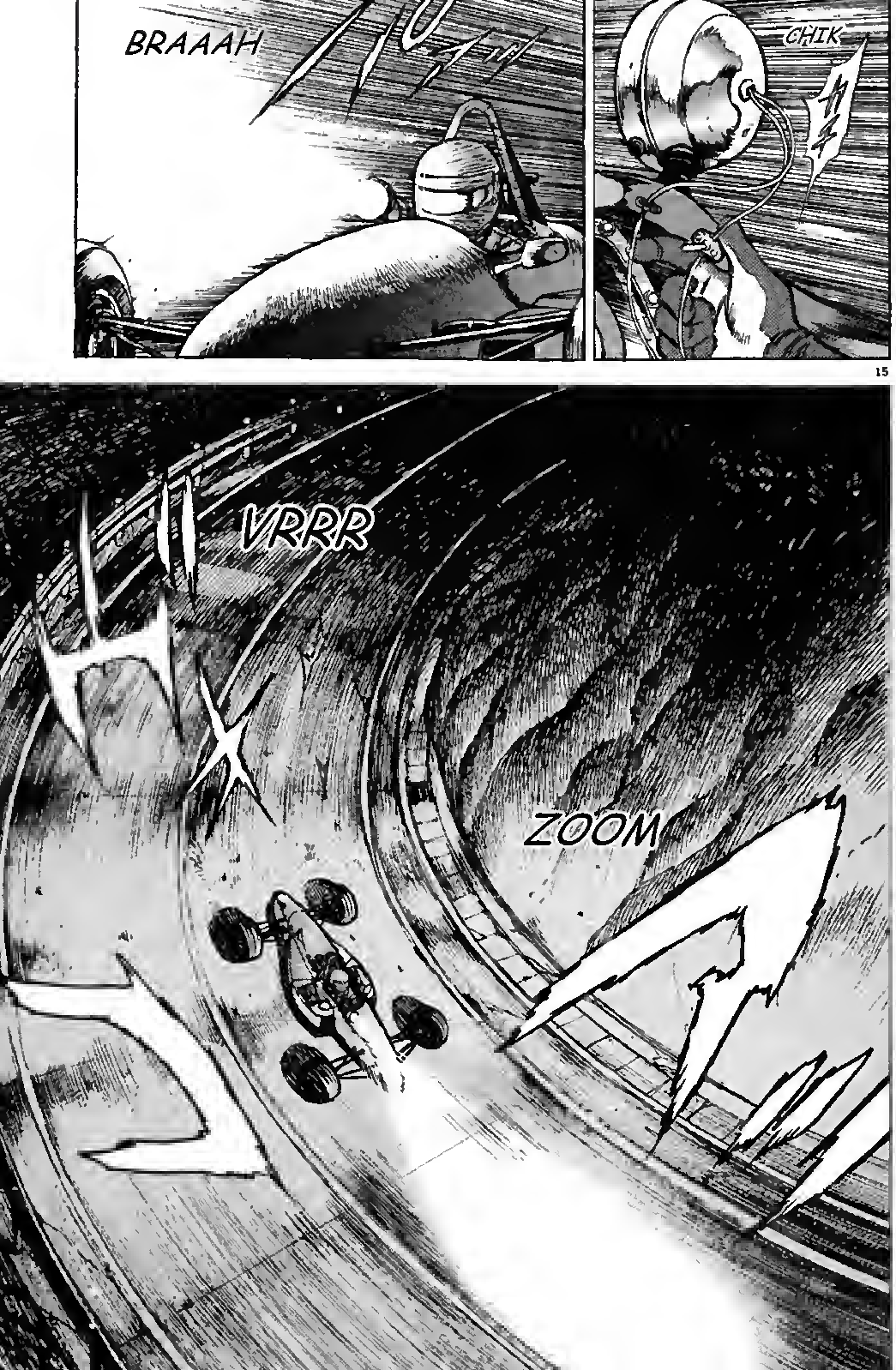
*Mu: Friction between the road and the tires


The curve ball you threw at me... I'll catch it flawlessly.
Just watch, Tamo-tsu.
PFOO
ふっ

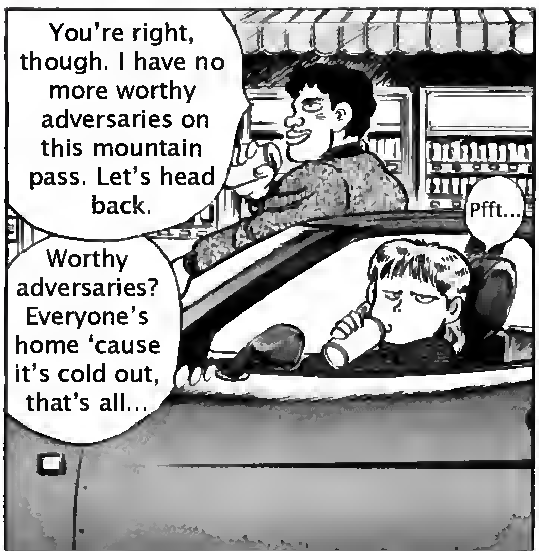
With that car, I'm gonna pass every other racer on the track!
That's right... There's no turning back!

Don't crash that thing!
VRRR
VRUT
VRRM
Even that black shadow!
VRR
RRR

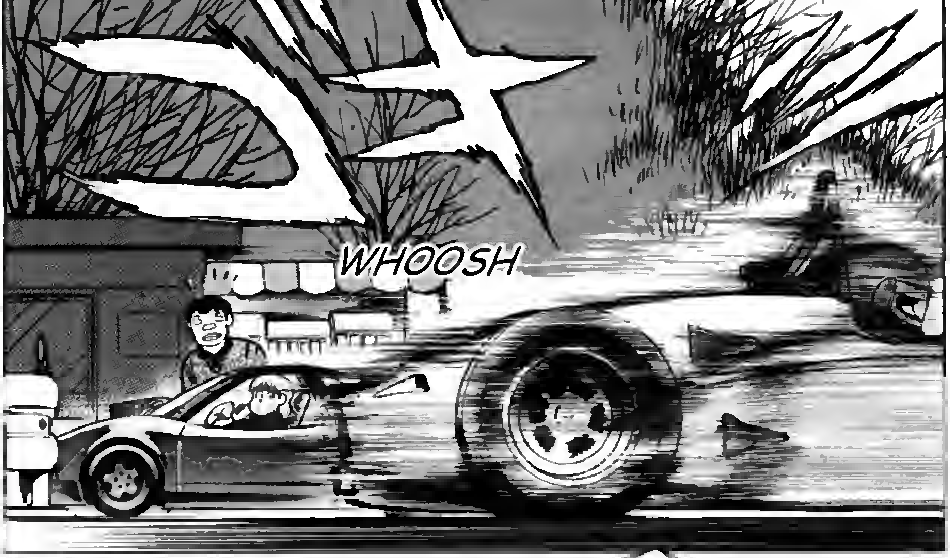
ZWOOM
That guy's a freak of natu-re...
VROOOOOH!


BRAAAH
CHIK
15
VRRR
ZOOM

VRRR
BRAAH
Let's just go home, Tometaro.
Idiot! I told you not to call me that!
But you ARE Tometaro.
I told you I don't like that name!

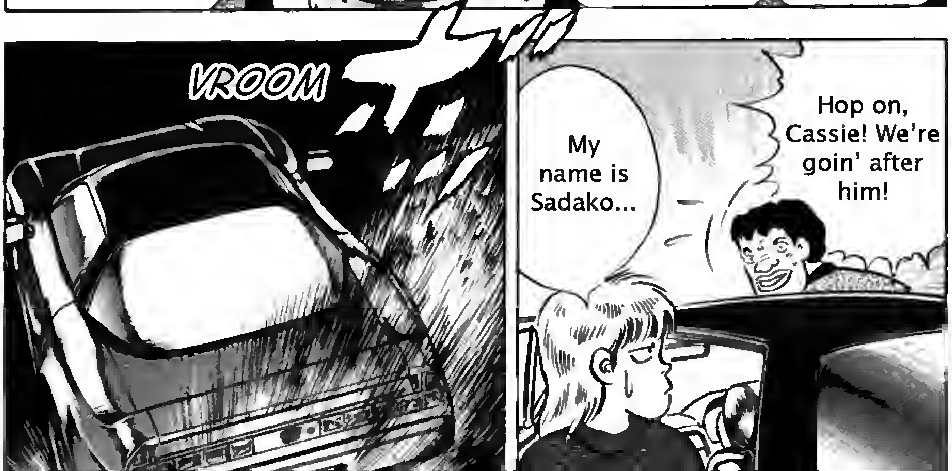

You're right, though. I have no more worthy adversaries on this mountain pass. Let's head back.
Pfft...
Worthy adversaries? Everyone's home 'cause it's cold out, that's all...

How about, "Senna of the Mountain Pass"?
Then what am I supposed to call you?


WHOOSH

...!
It was shaped like a praying mantis or something.
Whoa! What was that?
A motor-cycle?
VRRRRRRN

That man just accepted the challenge of Senna of the Mountain Pass!
A car like that, drivin' on a public road like this... Whoever it is, he's got some balls.
No, that was a formula car called the FJ1600.


VROOM
My name is Sadako...
Hop on, Cassie! We're goin' after him!

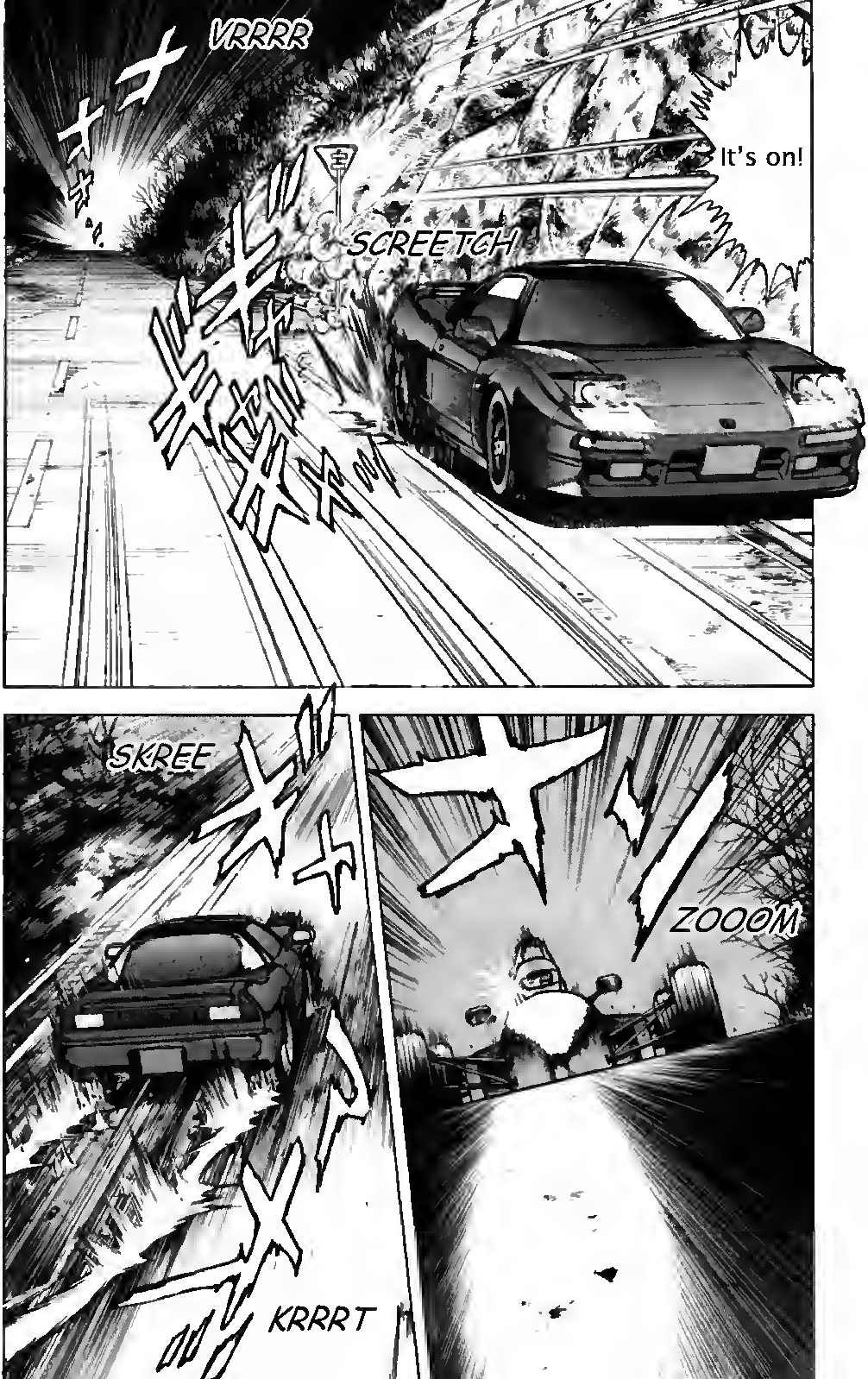
GRAH HAH HAH
わっはっは!
There's an old unused road, airhead! A shortcut!
SCREEECH
SKREE
Aren't you going the wrong way?
Good grief
If I beat that Formula racer, you'll never call me Tometaro ever again!
All right, Cassie. Listen up good!
VREHHHHH

Chapter 4:
Angel's Ascent

You sure he's coming?
Yes!

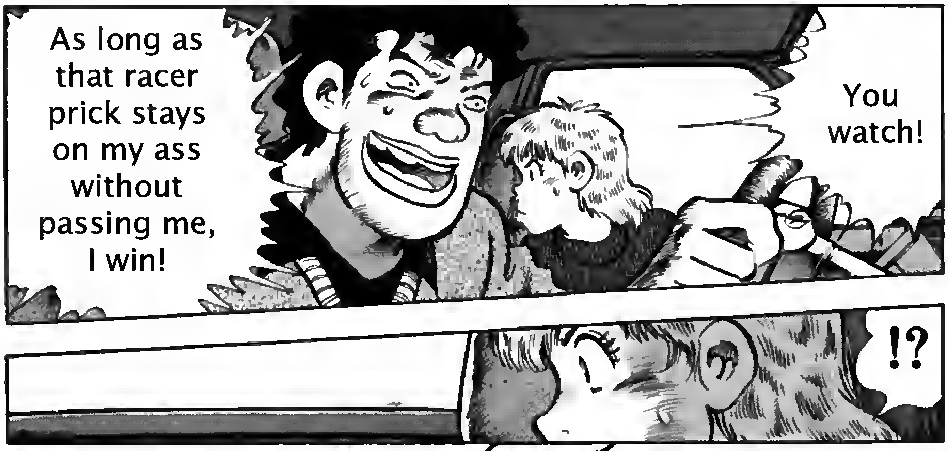
Why don't you just forget about it?
And when he comes by, we're gonna race!
Shut up!
...but if he doesn't, this is the only other place he can go!
That FJ guy might end up going straight into the path through the woods...

But isn't that dangerous?
At this rate, the road will start to freeze...
Yeah, kinda.
Keh heh... It's gettin' colder and colder out tonight...
FLOP
VRRRR
VRRR
Yeah, that's him all right!
Is that him...!?
Quit your moanin'! Get in the car!
VRR
Shut up! For the last time, I'm gonna race him!
Let's go home ...
VRR
Please ...

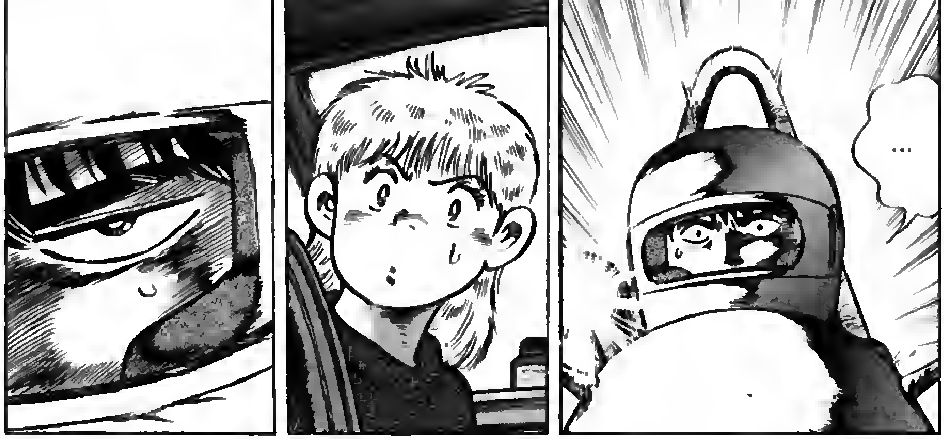

VRRRR
It's on!
SCREETCH
SKREE
ZOOOM
KRRRT

WOOSH
I'm goin' in front of him!
VRRR
ZOOM

!?
Hey, suc-ker!


As long as that racer prick stays on my ass without passing me, I win!
You watch!
!?

ZOOM
VRR
Go go go go!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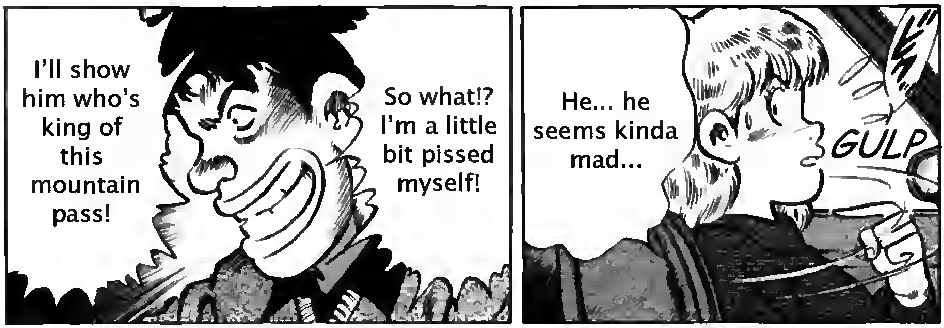
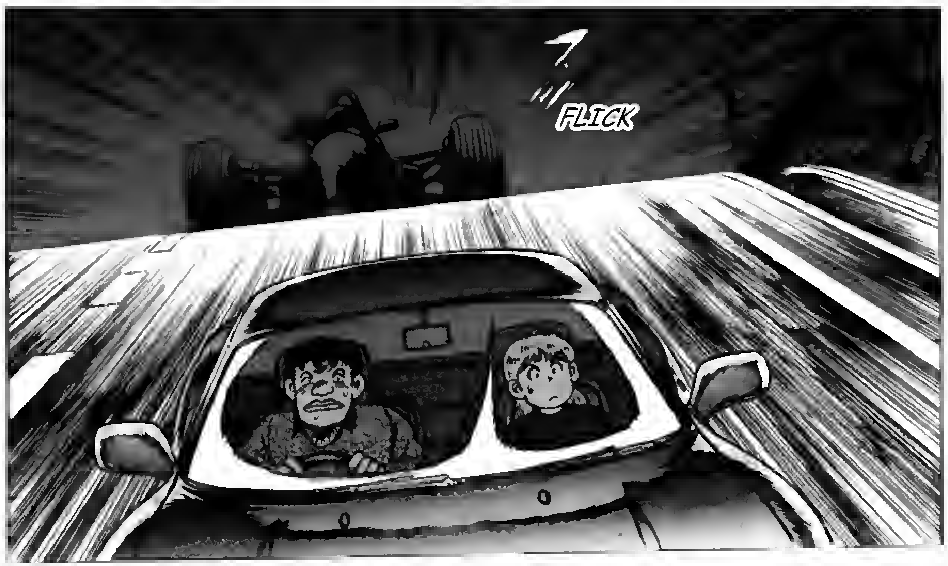

I'll show him who's king of this mountain pass!
So what!? I'm a little bit pissed myself!
He... he seems kinda mad...
GULP


FLICK

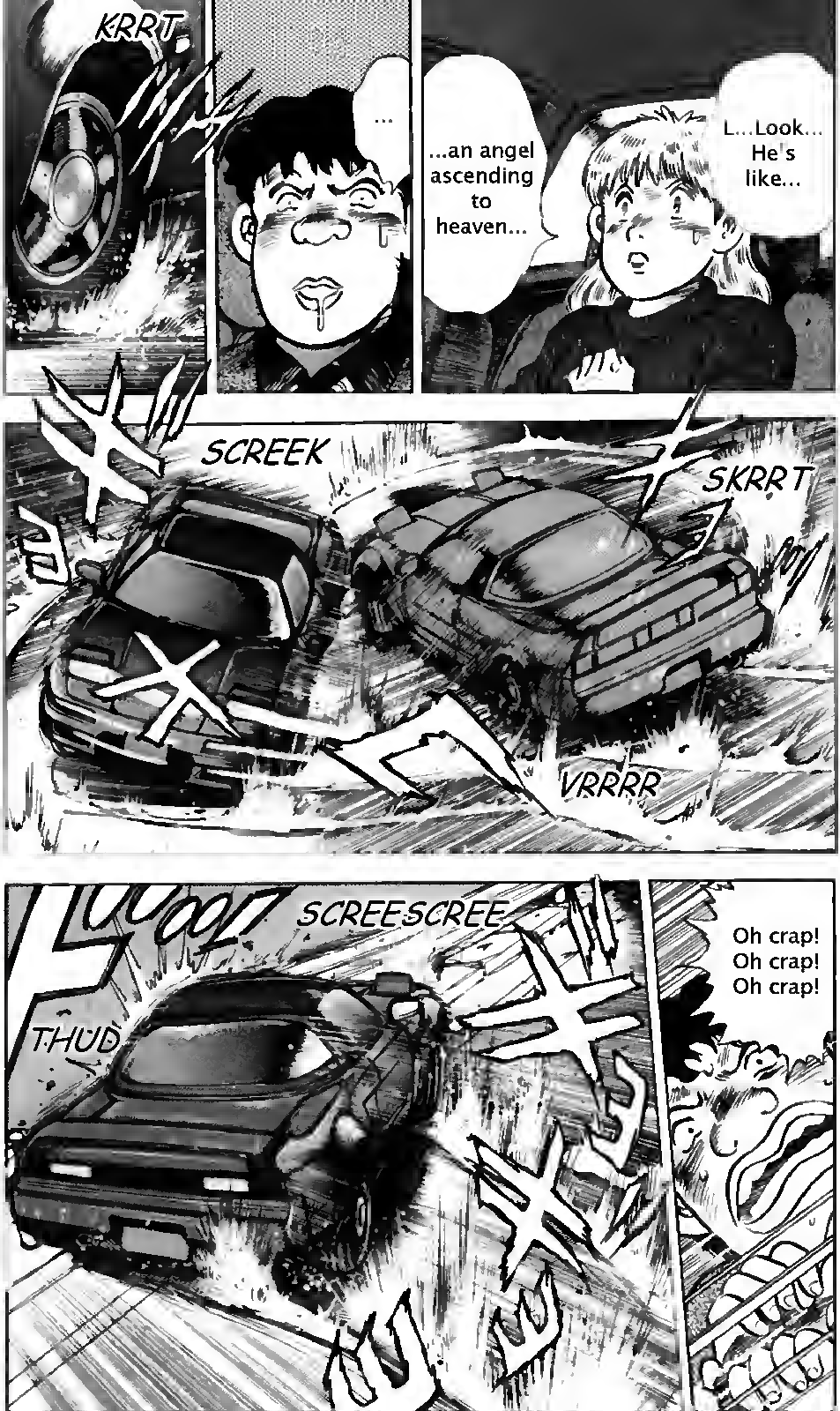
He... he turned off his lights...

I told you to stop calling me that!
That's enough, Tometaro!
Heh, sounds like fun! Two can play at that game!
He's gone...!?
He...
But... I don't see him anywhere!
No way! He must be behind me some-where ...
FLICK
Huh!?

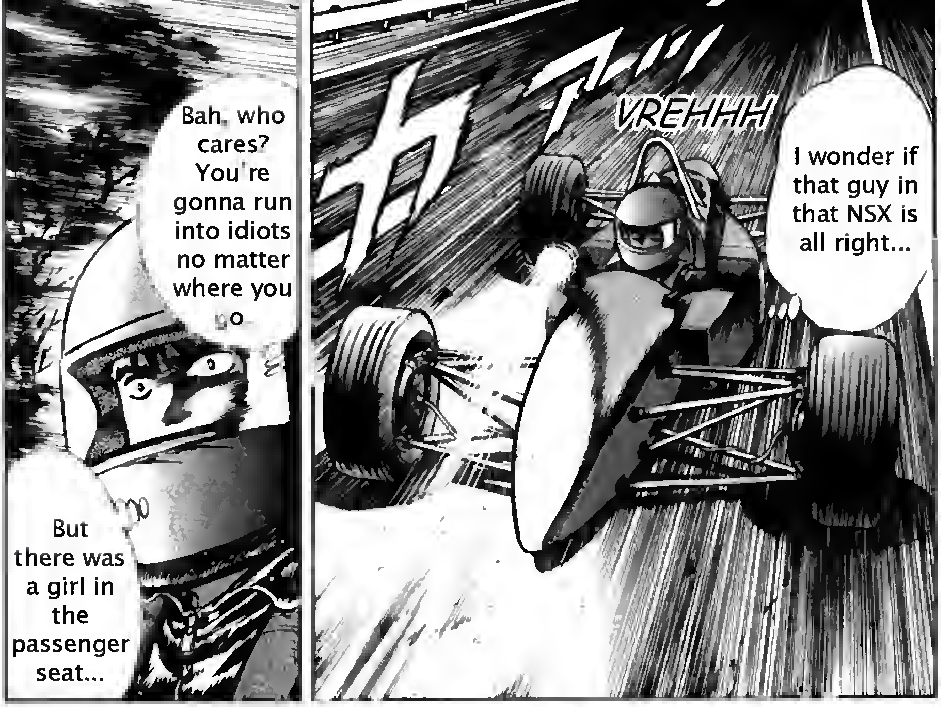
Zip it! I'm gonna pass him!
...
L...Let's just give up, Tometaro. He's out of your league.
Tom-etaro!
WOOSH
That prick! How the hell did he get in front of me!?
FWOOSH
Shut your mouth! I'm Senna of the Mountain Pass!

ZWOOOOM
!!

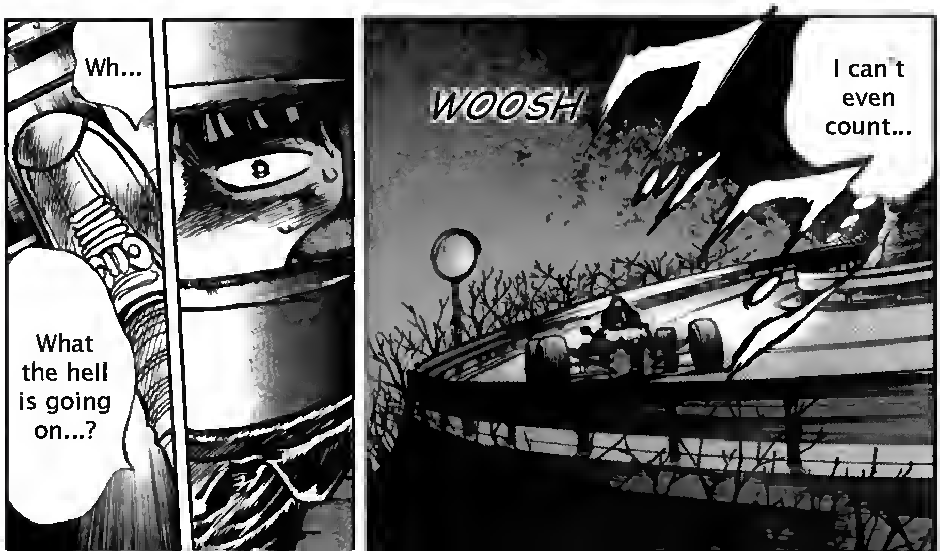
ZWOOOOM
!!

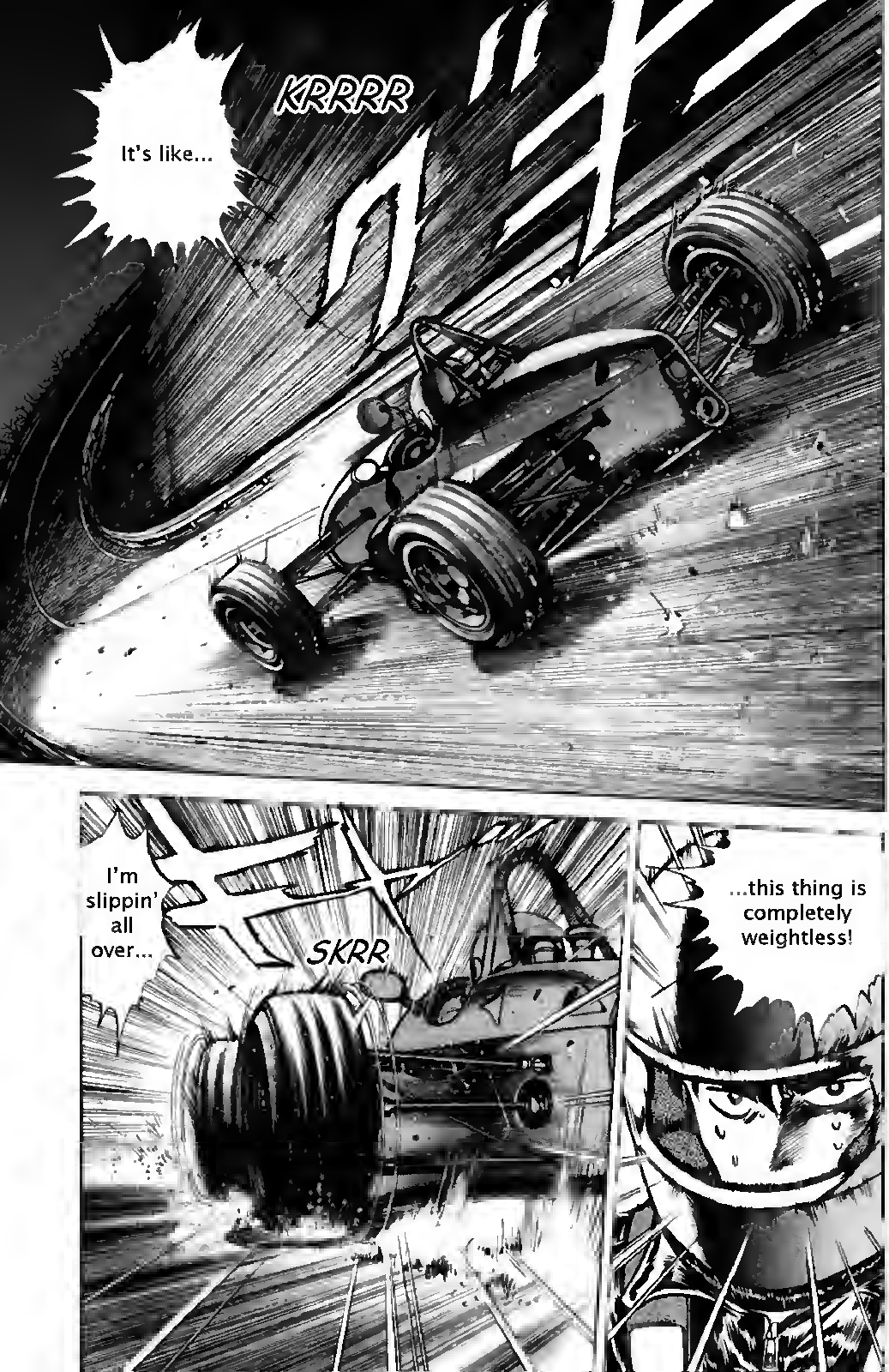

KRRT
...
...an angel ascending to heaven...
L...Look... He's like...
SCREEK
SKRRT
VRRRR
SCREESCREE
THUD
Oh crap! Oh crap! Oh crap!

SLUMP
Ugh... You okay?
Dumbass ...
KATUNK
I bet he'll spin out, too.
Man... The road is completely frozen over...
Tsk... Fine. Whatever, let's go home, Cass... I mean, Sadako.
Have you had enough yet, Tometaro? Let's go home already!
SHING
SHING
SHING
FWOOSH
VRRM
What's that s'posed to mean?
You were like a rabbit trying to prey on a wolf...
Just forget it.
BUBUNG

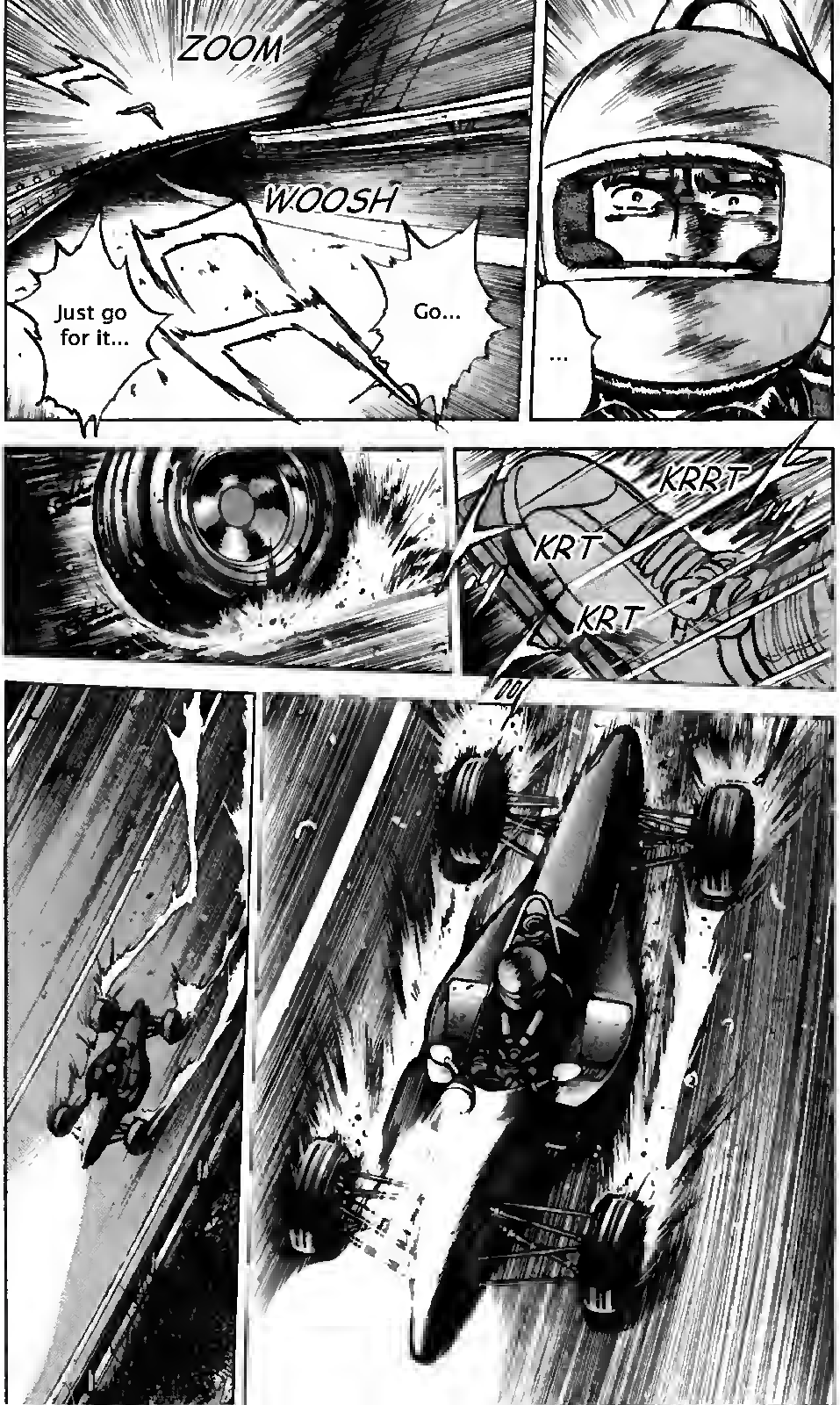

Bah, who cares? You're gonna run into idiots no matter where you go
But there was a girl in the passenger seat...
VREHHH
I wonder if that guy in that NSX is all right...

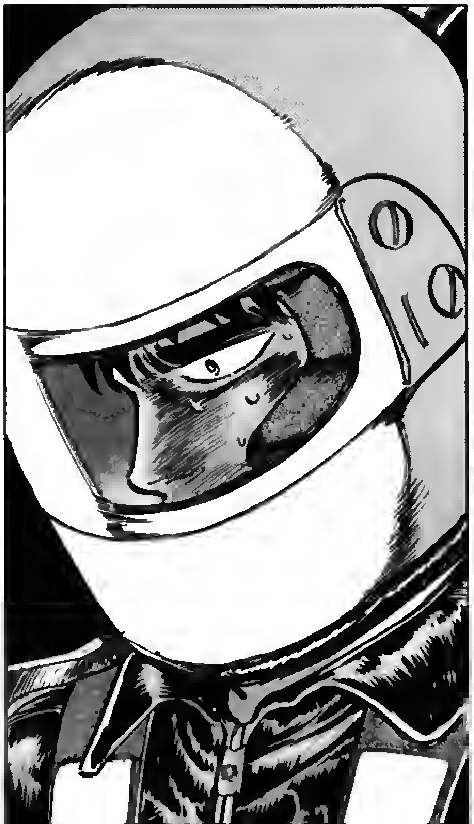
Tsk... What am I thinking? I'm not one to judge. How many times have I put Tamotsu in danger while he was in the passenger seat?
What if you crash and the girl gets hurt?
If you wanna pull stupid crap like that, that's your own business. But don't be bringin' anyone else into it!

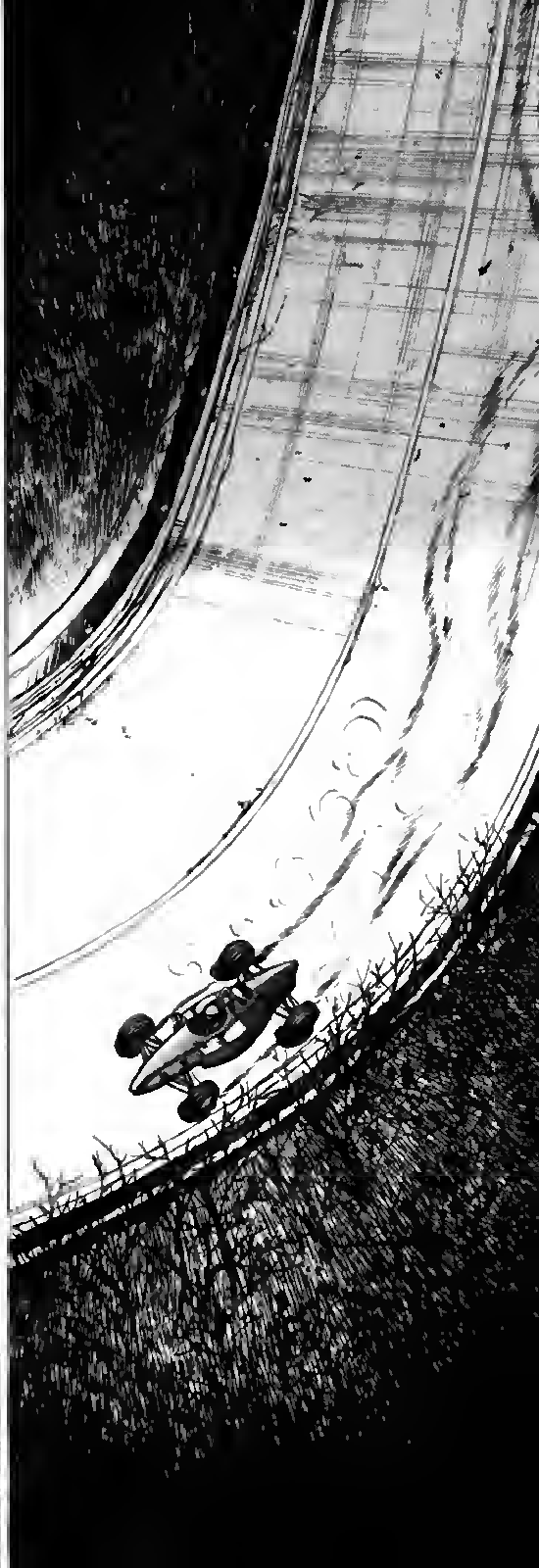

Wh...
What the hell is going on...?
WOOSH
I can't even count...


KRRRR
It's like...
I'm slippin' all over...
SKRR
...this thing is completely weightless!

Bah, like I give a crap!
SHIVER
I'm gonna charge through this corner!
BREHHHH
GLIMMER
GLIMMER
GLIMMER

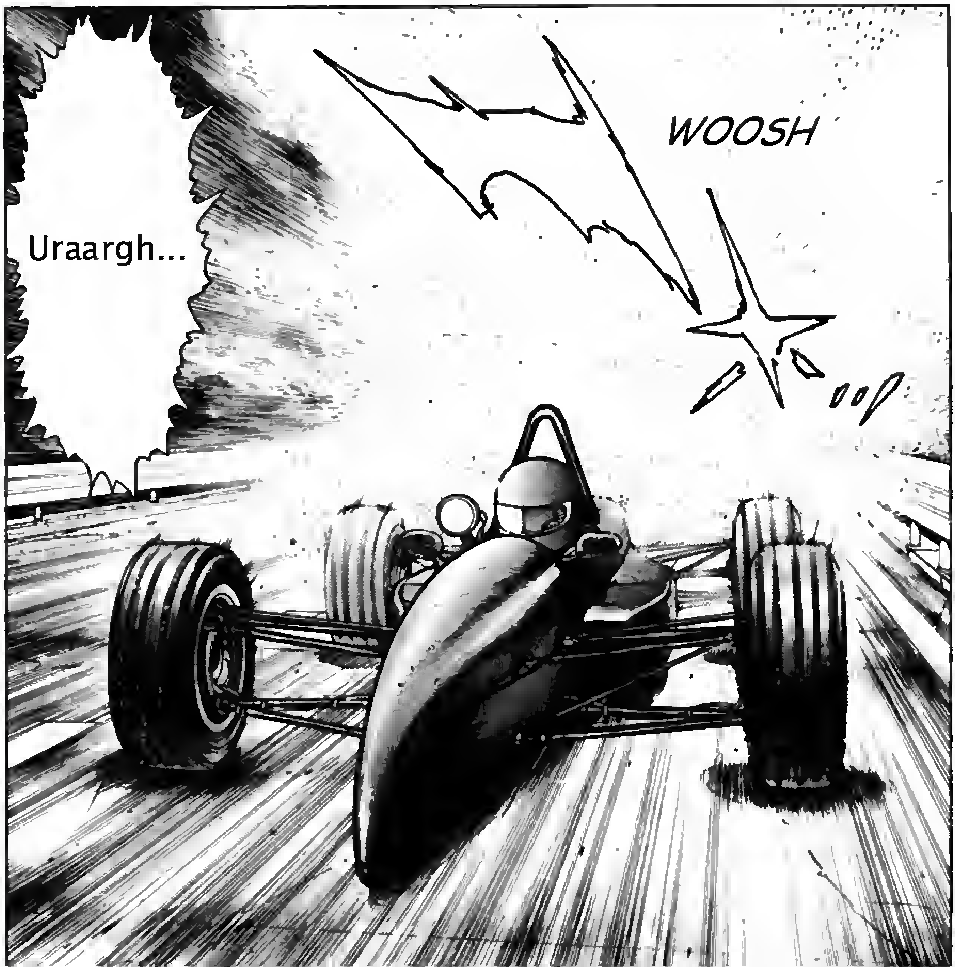

ZOOM
WOOSH
Just go for it...
Go...
...
KRRT
KRT
KRT
DDI

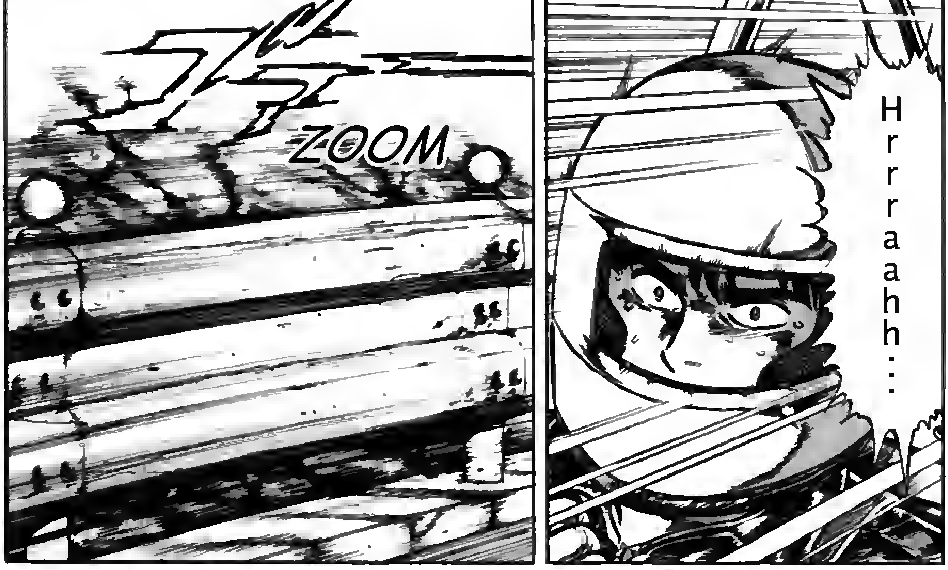


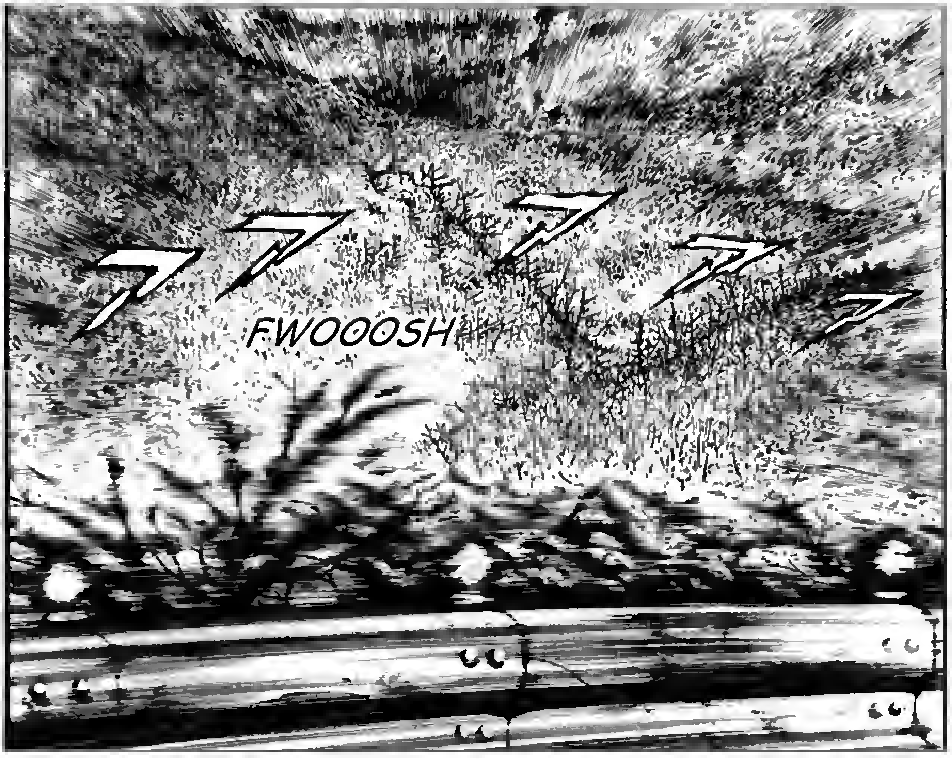


Chapter 5: Uncertain

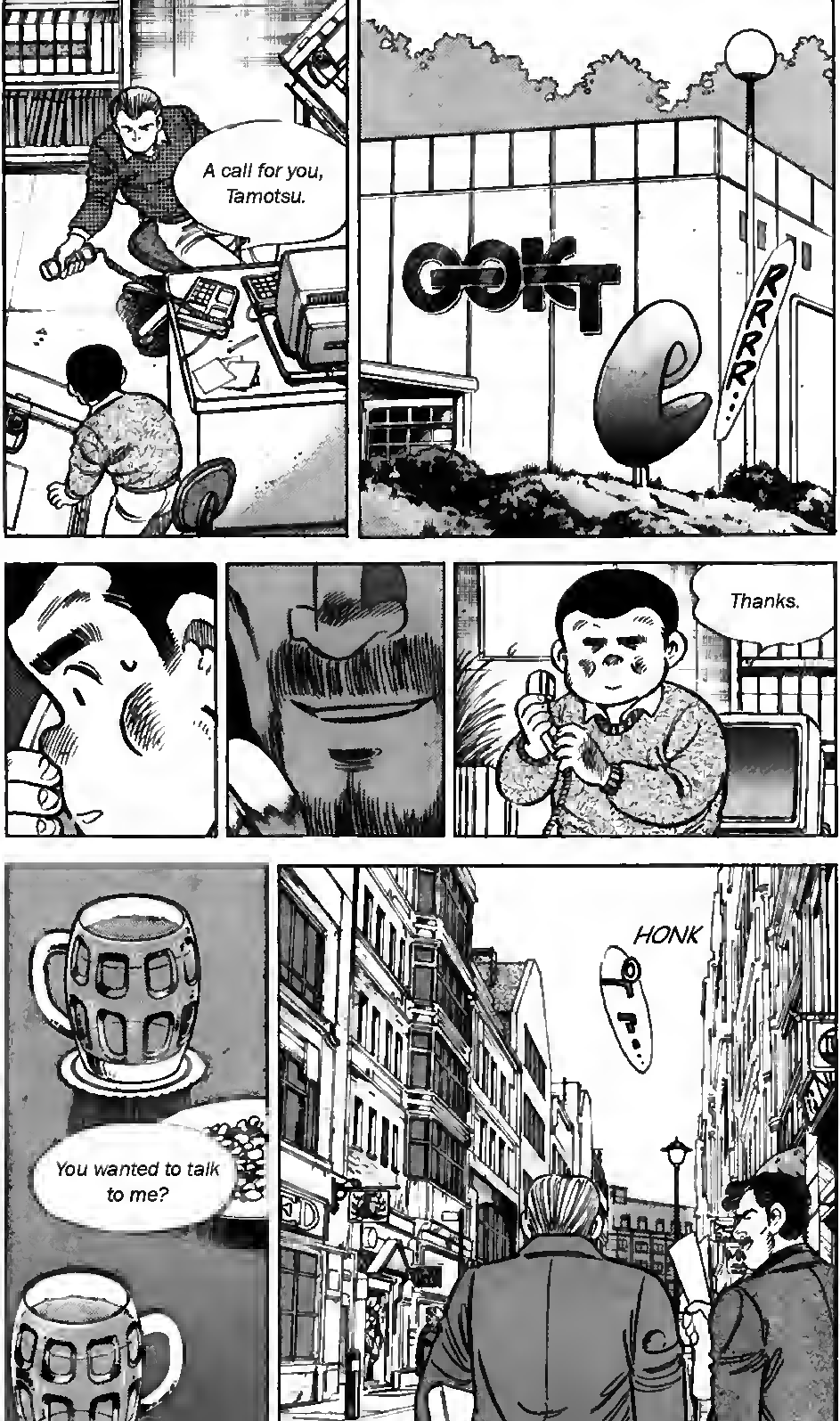
VREHHH
Urgh...


WOOSH
Uraargh...


ZOOM
Hrrraahh...

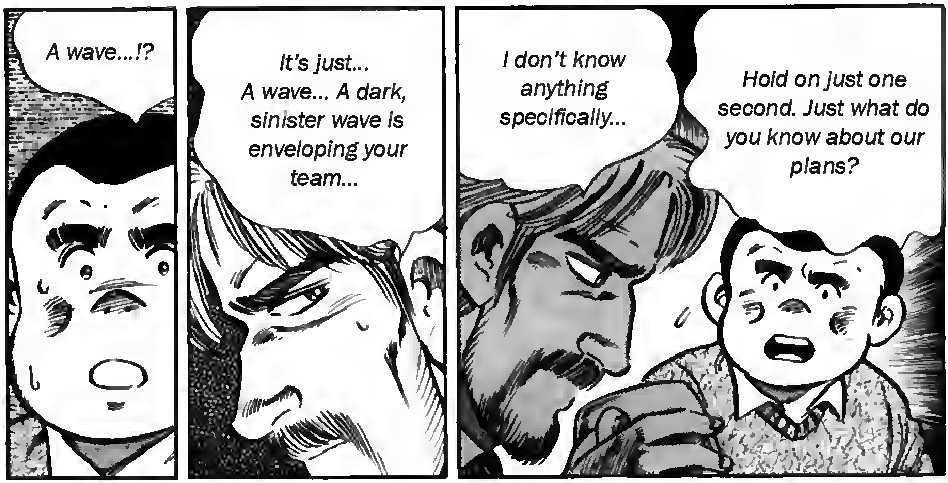

FWOOOSH

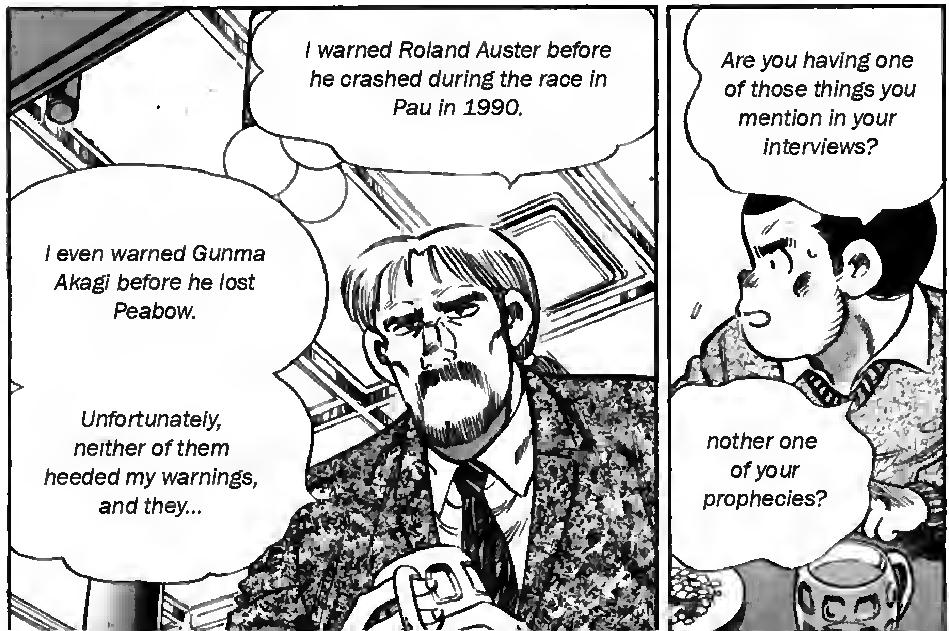
Urgh!
Urgh!


A call for you, Tamotsu.
GOKT
RRRR...
Thanks.
You wanted to talk to me?
HONK
P...

...
I'm gonna be straight with you. You need to forfeit this race!
I wasn't sure if I should tell you...
I've even stopped my car in front of Gunma's house. I'm serious. But I ended up leaving without ringing the doorbell.
Honestly, I thought for a while that it may be best not to say anything...
What is this all about, Jesus? I have no idea what you're trying to say...
Umm...
You're planning something really risky, are you not!?
You know what I'm talking about. Don't play dumb.

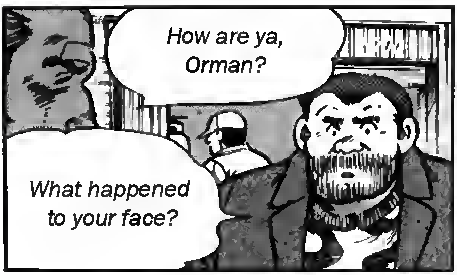
When a man tries to become a God, all that happens is they lose their life.
You should give it up.
Something risky...?

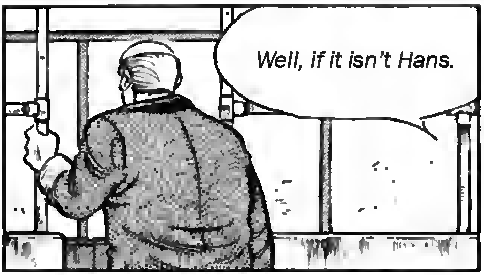

A wave...!?
It's just... A wave... A dark, sinister wave is enveloping your team...
I don't know anything specifically...
Hold on just one second. Just what do you know about our plans?

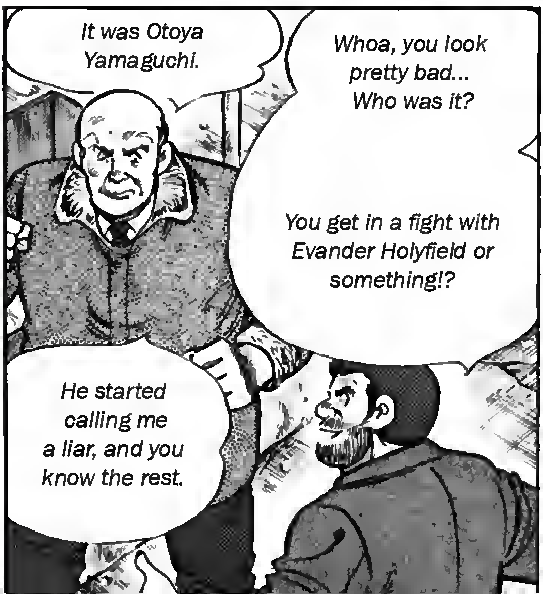

I warned Roland Auster before he crashed during the race in Pau in 1990.
I even warned Gunma Akagi before he lost Peabow.
Unfortunately, neither of them heeded my warnings, and they...
Are you having one of those things you mention in your interviews?
nother one of your prophecies?

SHUK
Je...
Jesus
...
Y...You're not tryin' to tell me that... Gunma's gonna...
...die, are you!?
...
MURMUR
MURMUR
OH ?

VROOM
Silverstone


How are ya, Orman?
What happened to your face?

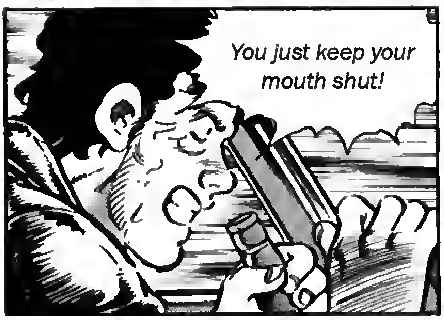

Well, if it isn't Hans.


It was Otoya Yamaguchi.
He started calling me a liar, and you know the rest.
Whoa, you look pretty bad... Who was it?
You get in a fight with Evander Holyfield or something!?

Well, I got in a little scuffle with a young man. I'm too old for that kind of thing... Hah hah...

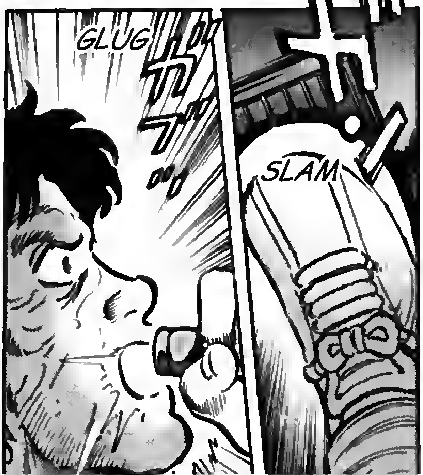
But we had an issue with our sponsors, and we had to postpone his entry for another year.
We signed a contract with him, promising to get him in F1.
Huh...
By all rights...
It's a little late to be saying this, but I really regret letting Gunma Akagi go.
You know...
That's the reason. And now I look like this.
That's the reason he beat you up?
FOSTER'S
Guess I was just unlucky.
Hmph!
Now don't be like that, Hans. It's just the way things turned out.
...I should have been the one to take Gunma Akagi into F1. Not you, Orman.

VRRROOM


You just keep your mouth shut!

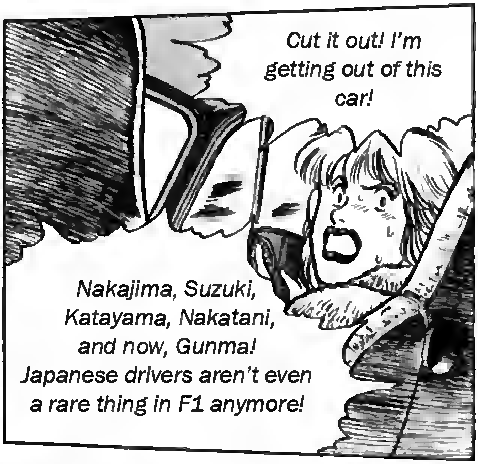
That's enough, Otoya! You're gonna get us killed if you go any faster!

I've had just about enough of this crap!

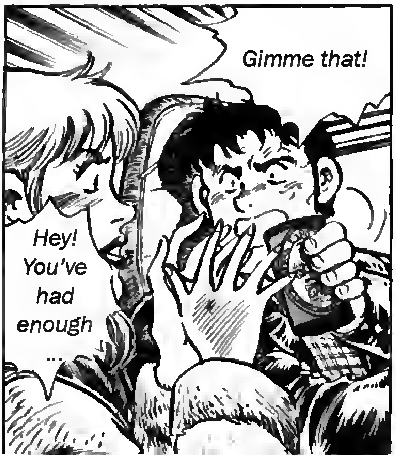

GLUG
SLAM

Another goddamn year of F3000!?
That freakin' Hans screwed me over big time!

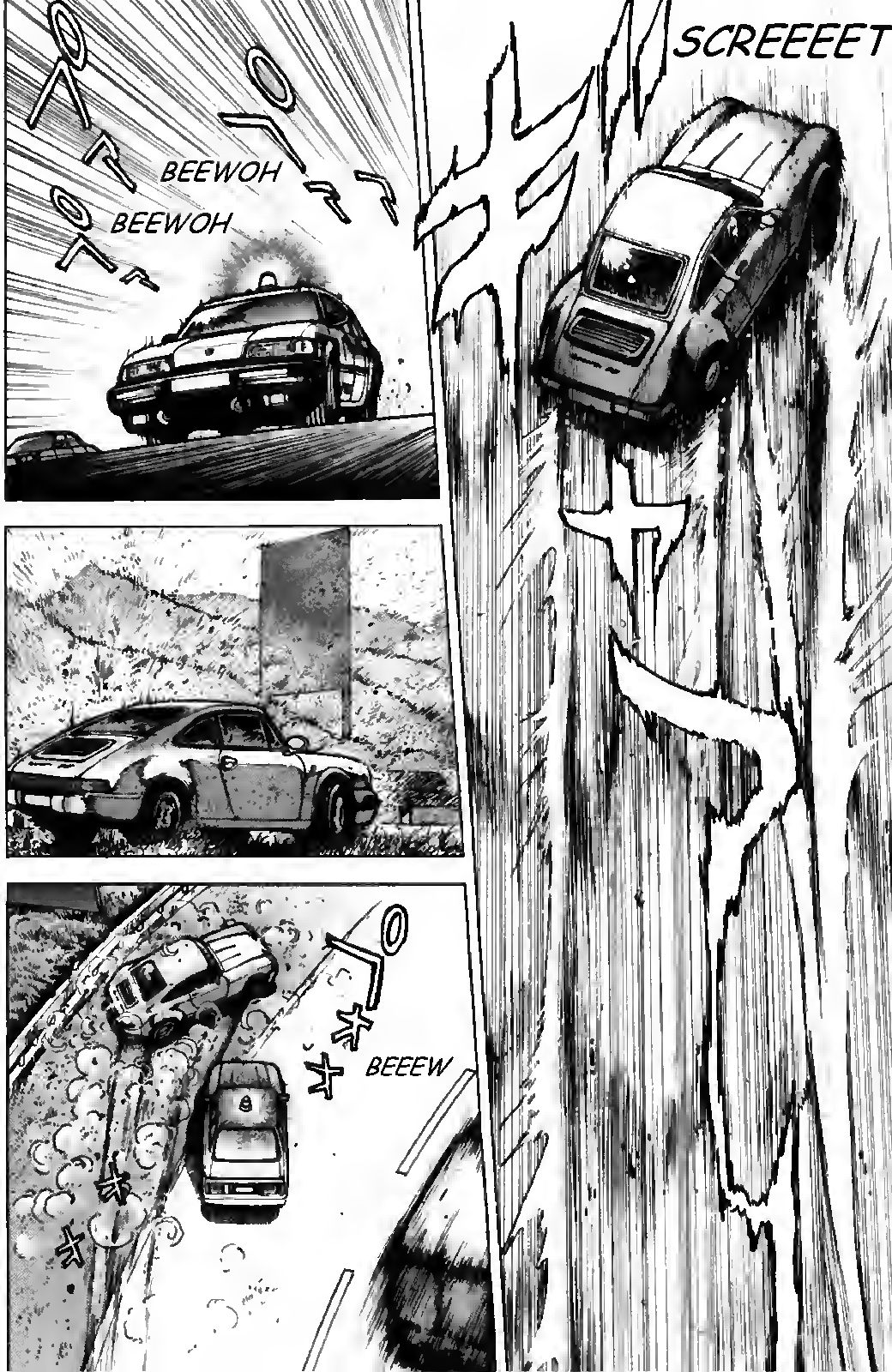
What, you mean all you care about is standing out!?
It's about prestige.


Cut it out! I'm getting out of this car!
Nakajima, Suzuki, Katayama, Nakatani, and now, Gunma! Japanese drivers aren't even a rare thing in F1 anymore!

I just can't wait another year! Why else did i turn my back on Yuma in the first place!? That was the only reason!
It's something a woman could never understand!

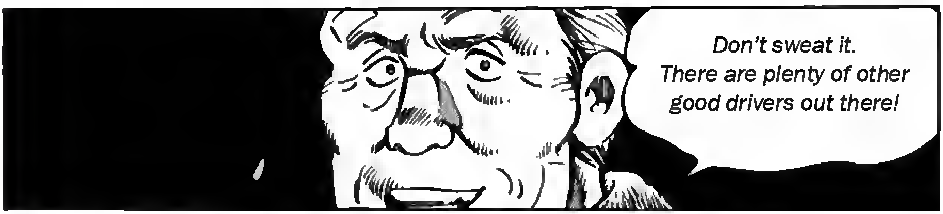

Gimme that!
Hey! You've had enough ...

To race in F1 this year... To pass Gunma...
That's what prestige means to me!


BEEWOH
BEEWOH
SCREEEET
BEEEW

This guy is completely hammered...
Ugh...
WHIFF
Step out of your vehicle!
Do you realize how much you were swerving!?
Hey, officer... Heh heh...
Where's my Goddess of Luck...? Where'd she go? Keh heh...
He's fired! I'm canceling his contract!
Let him know that I don't want anything to do with him anymore!
What!? He was dead drunk and speeding on the highway!?

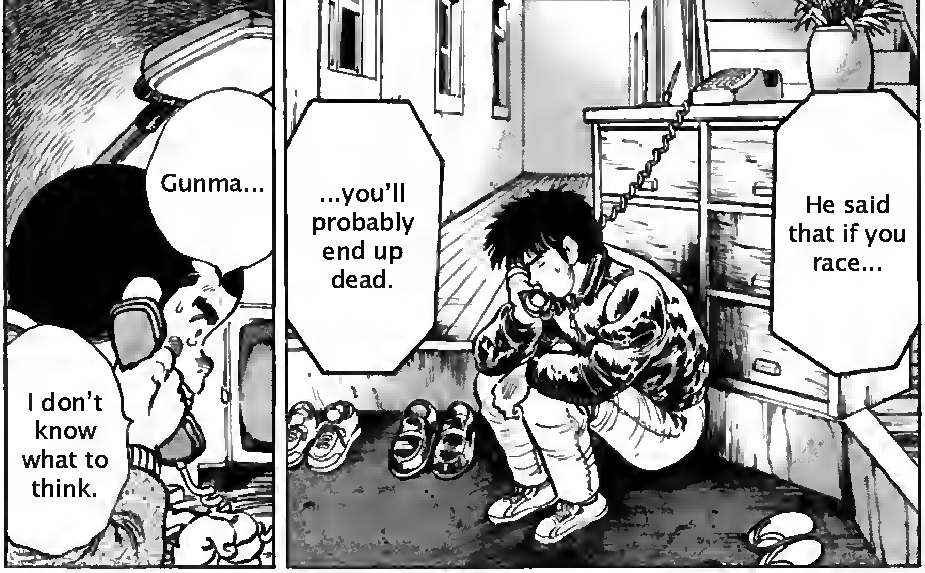
Oh, and tell him one more thing! Tell him congratulations, because he has a big future ahead of him in street racing, the fool!

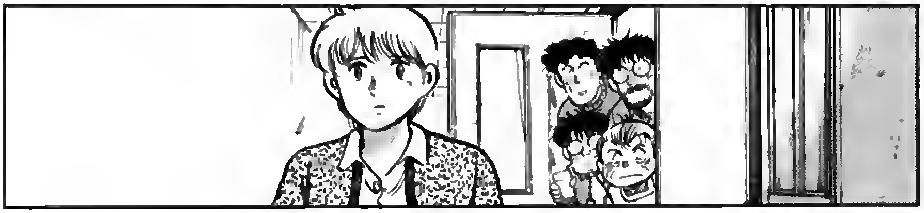

Don't sweat it. There are plenty of other good drivers out there!

BROOH
Too many of them, in fact...
You're right...
PAT

How was it? Was it good practice?
Well, either way, you sure are one of a kind! Ha ha...
I'm not sure if it was ...
I dunno ...
And yet you're still your fearless old self!
HA HAHA
I was freaking out... All night long...
I was scared, man... I've never felt so scared driving before...

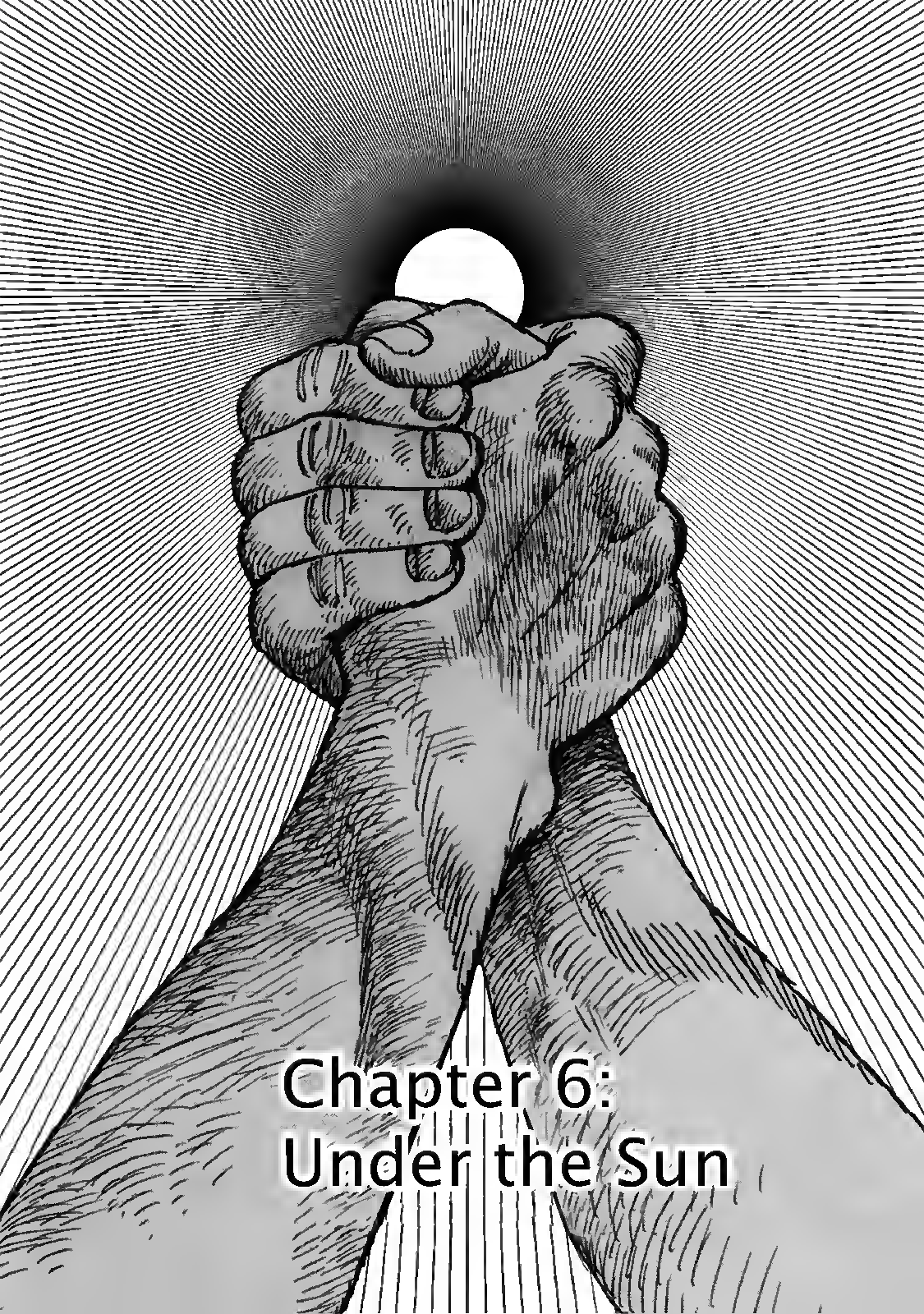
Don't screw with it too much, dude.
It's fine the way it is Just the way it is. You got that?
I'm practicing in Hakone... I'm sayin'... Listen...
It's me, Tamotsu...
How's the car goin'? Everything good?
Jesus came by today...
Gunma... I'm... I'm scared. I dunno what to say... I dunno what to do...
He said he senses a sinister wave surrounding us.
He came by and told us not to enter the race.
I'm gonna give it to you straight.
Jesus ...?


Gunma...
I don't know what to think.
...you'll probably end up dead.
He said that if you race...



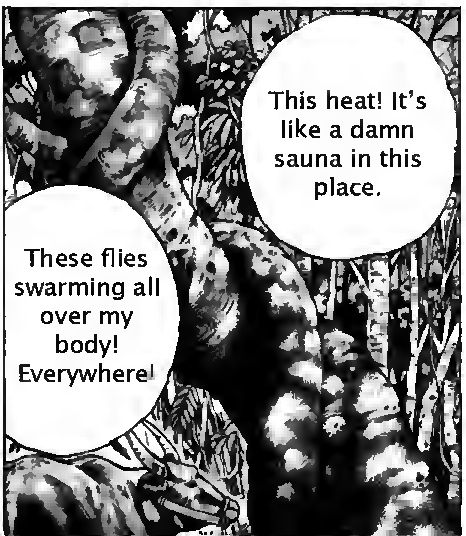
The future ain't decided yet... Peabow and Roland might have up and died, but the future ain't decided just yet.
All we can do is keep livin' our lives... Just shut up and live our lives... That's all there is to it.
You know that, right? I ain't quittin'...
Listen up, Tamotsu... I ain't quittin'.
And that means you ain't quittin' either...

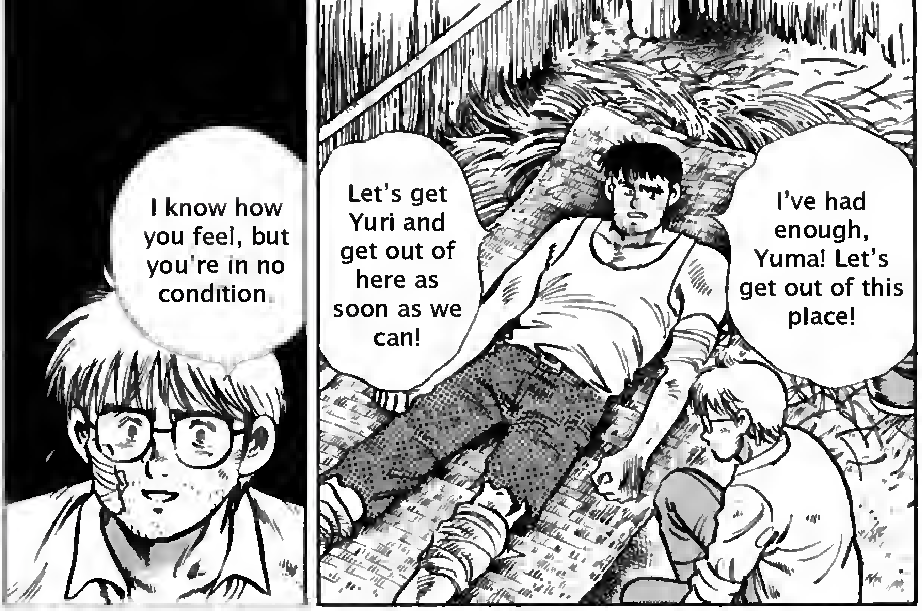
...no matter how scary that life is.
...can stop someone from living their life...
Not anyone on this earth...
You should know that of all people. No one...
We're just gonna live our lives!
You and I...

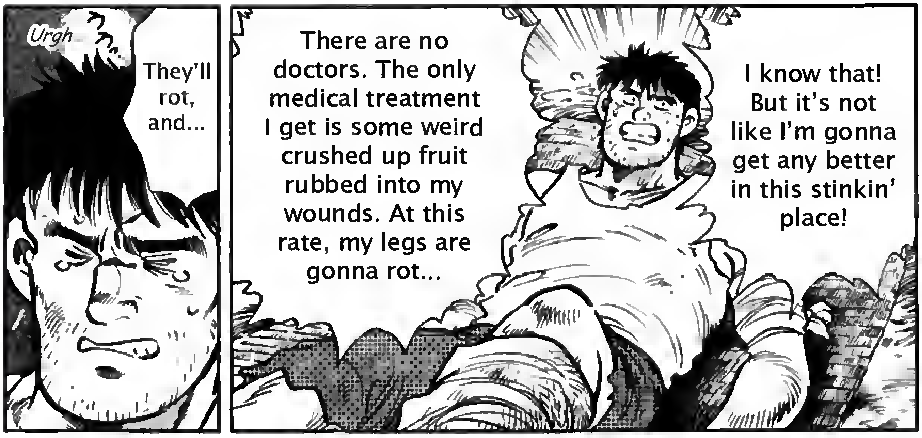

Chapter 6:
Under the Sun

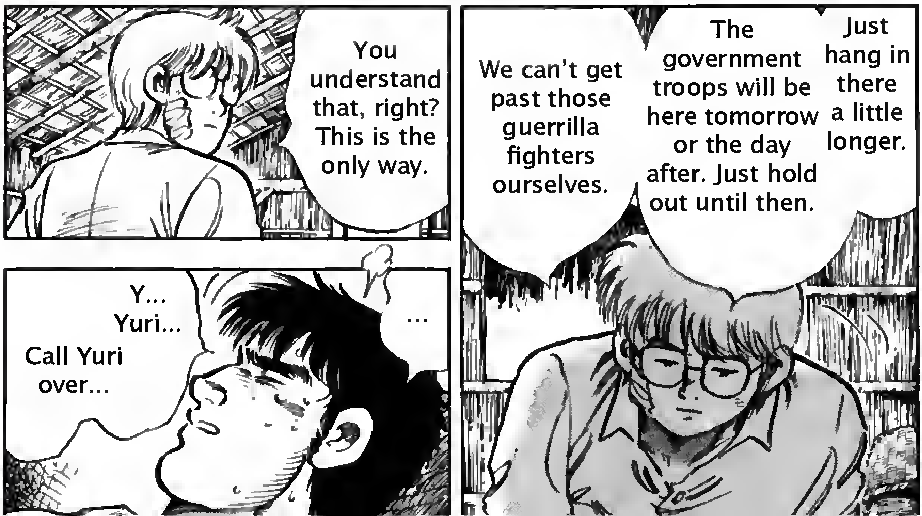
I'm fed up with all this!
I can't take it anymore!

There's nothing good to eat, and even if there was...
...I wouldn't have an appetite with this damn stench!

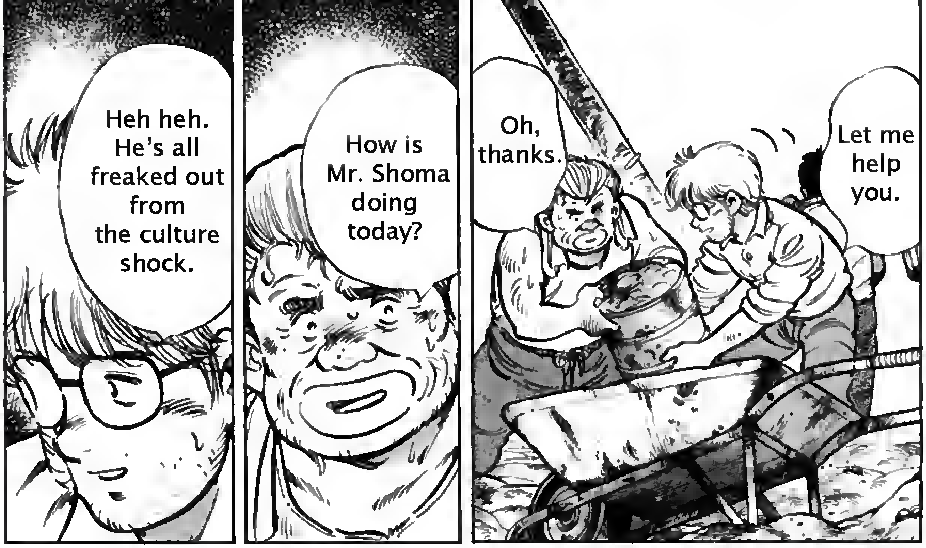

This heat! It's like a damn sauna in this place.
These flies swarming all over my body! Everywhere!

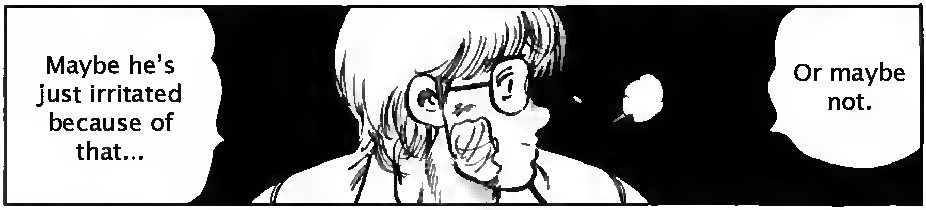

I know how you feel, but you're in no condition.
Let's get Yuri and get out of here as soon as we can!
I've had enough, Yuma! Let's get out of this place!

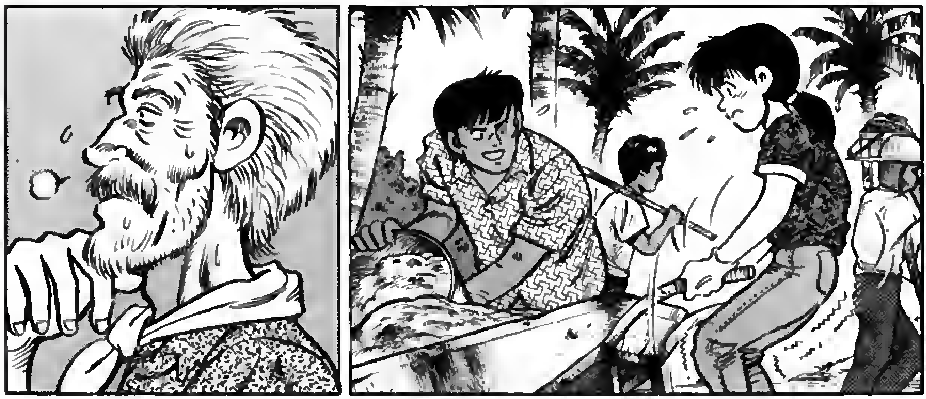

Urgh
They'll rot, and...
There are no doctors. The only medical treatment I get is some weird crushed up fruit rubbed into my wounds. At this rate, my legs are gonna rot...
I know that! But it's not like I'm gonna get any better in this stinkin' place!


You understand that, right? This is the only way.
We can't get past those guerrilla fighters ourselves.
The government troops will be here tomorrow or the day after. Just hold out until then.
Just hang in there a little longer.
Y... Yuri... Call Yuri over...
...

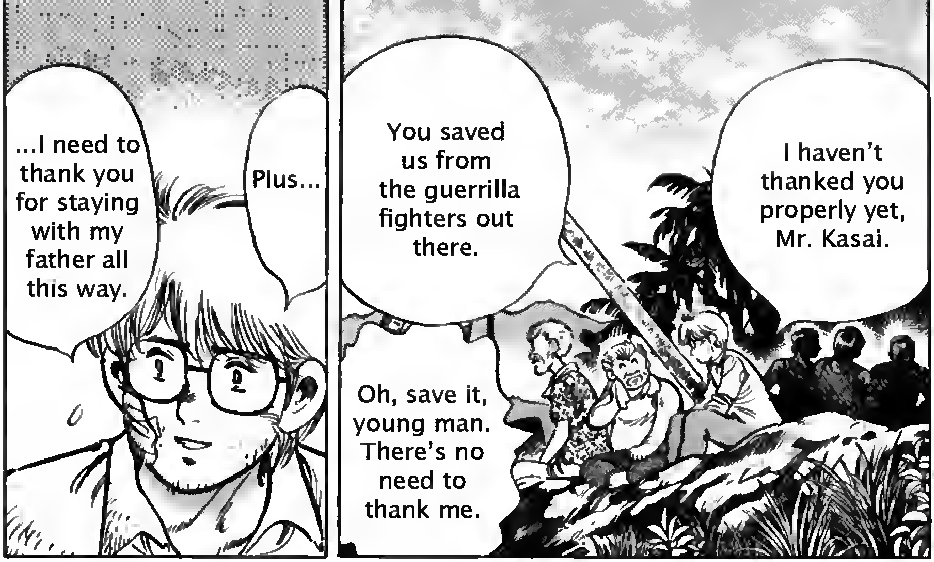
Even kids this young are working the fields...
Other than the infants...
...no one has any time to enjoy themselves.

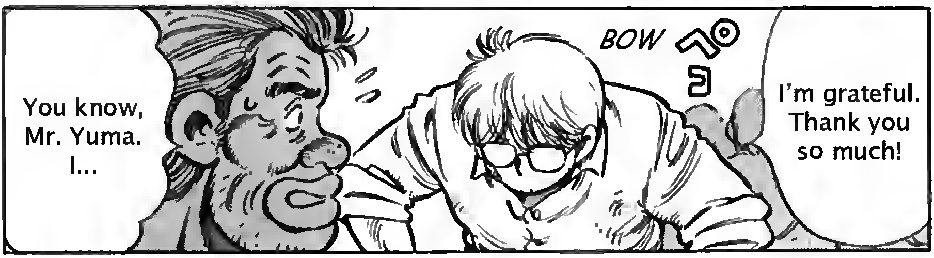

Heh heh. He's all freaked out from the culture shock.
How is Mr. Shoma doing today?
Oh, thanks.
Let me help you.

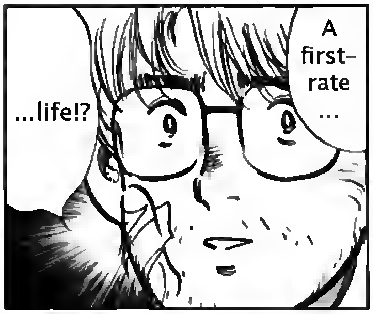

Maybe he's just irritated because of that...
Or maybe not.

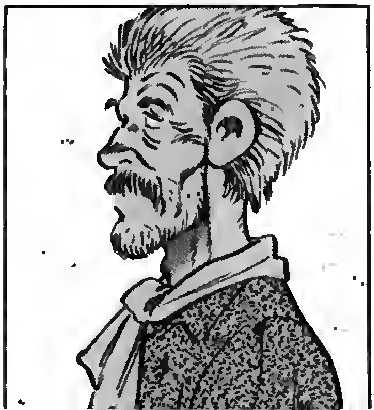


Let's get some rest.


...I need to thank you for staying with my father all this way.
Plus...
You saved us from the guerrilla fighters out there.
I haven't thanked you properly yet, Mr. Kasai.
Oh, save it, young man. There's no need to thank me.


You know, Mr. Yuma. I...
BOW
I'm grateful. Thank you so much!

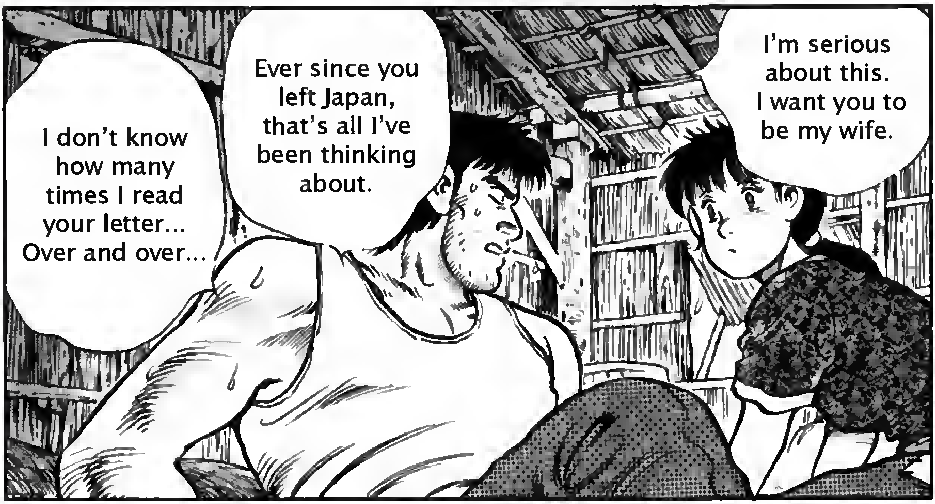

...life!?
A first-rate ...



...I just wanted to live a first-rate life with this man here... Private First-Class Akagi...

My brother is getting all agitated because you won't give him enough attention.
Yeah, I forgot to tell you.
Hey, should I go check up on Shoma?
All right, Private Kasai, it's time to get back to work!
SWF
Yes, sir.

Won't you marry me, Yuri?

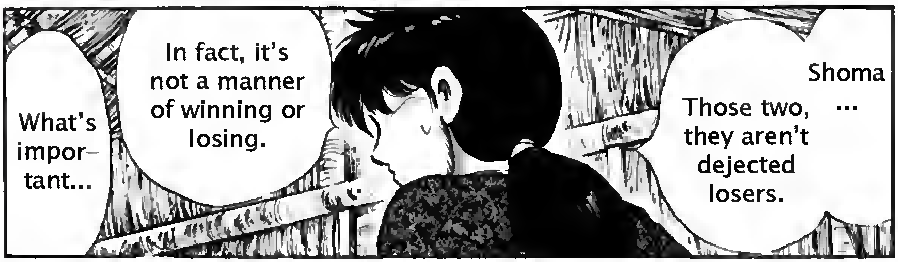

I don't know how many times I read your letter... Over and over...
Ever since you left Japan, that's all I've been thinking about.
I'm serious about this. I want you to be my wife.

...
I need you in my life.
I...

I'm being sincere. Will you...?
Yuri...

Plea-
se...
I'm not
kidding
around
here.
I'm in
love with
you.
I have
terrible
daddy
issues.
I'm sorry,
Shoma.
I...
Yu...
Yuri
...
I'm sorry...
Sh...
Shoma
...
I'm
begging
you...
Please.
Respect?
And just
who...
It's... It's not
that I don't like
you...
I just don't
have much
respect for
you.

They fled all the way out here because they couldn't succeed in Japan!
They're just a couple of old, dejected losers!
...do you have respect for? Those senile geezers out there?
I have to go now.
Yuri!


What's impor-tant...
In fact, it's not a manner of winning or losing.
Shoma ...
Those two, they aren't dejected losers.

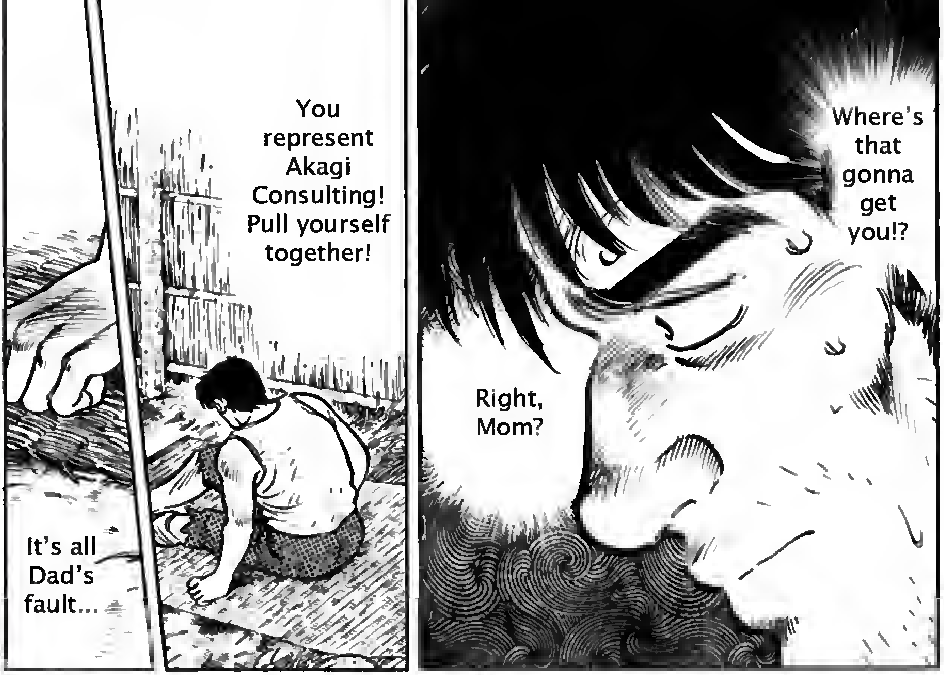
...

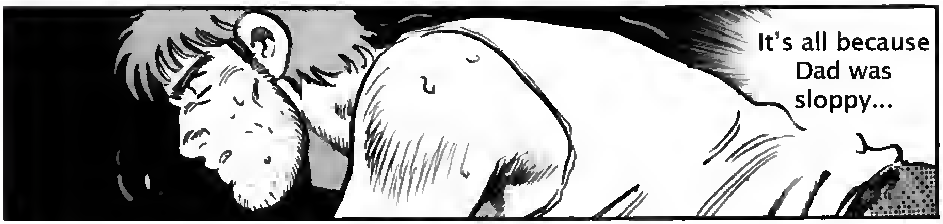
...is that they're trying.

Heh... Ridiculous...

You're sloppy, Shoma.
What the hell am I getting lectured by a little girl for?

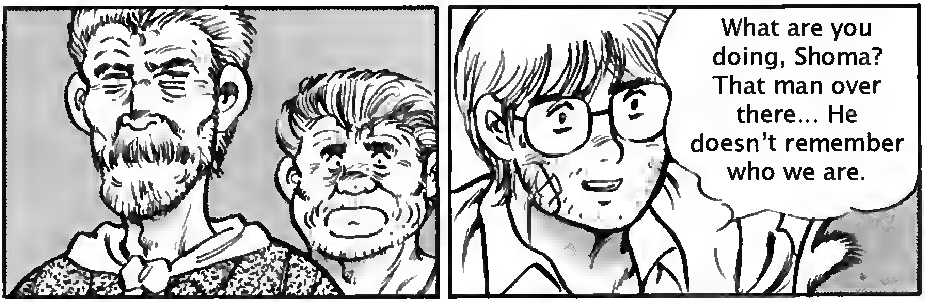
You cried like a baby...
When you were caught by those guerrilla fighters, and you were drinking water from that coconut shell that that girl brought...
Way too damn sloppy.

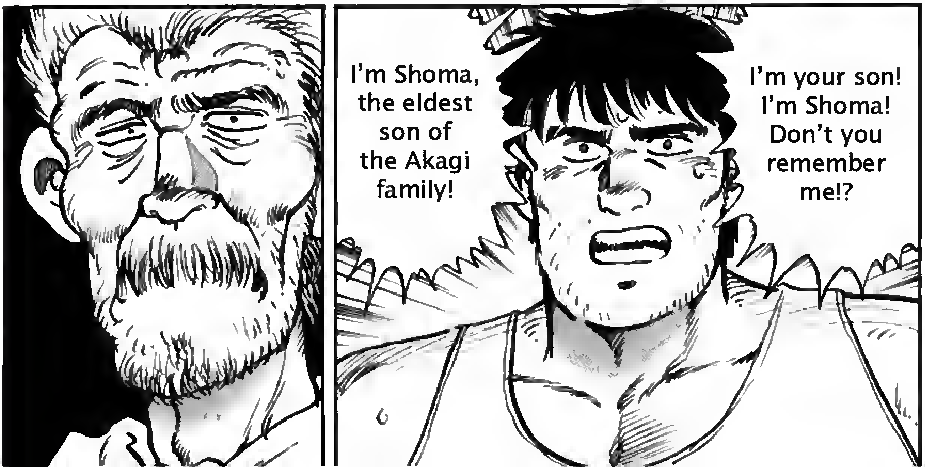

You represent Akagi Consulting! Pull yourself together!
It's all Dad's fault...
Where's that gonna get you!?
Right, Mom?

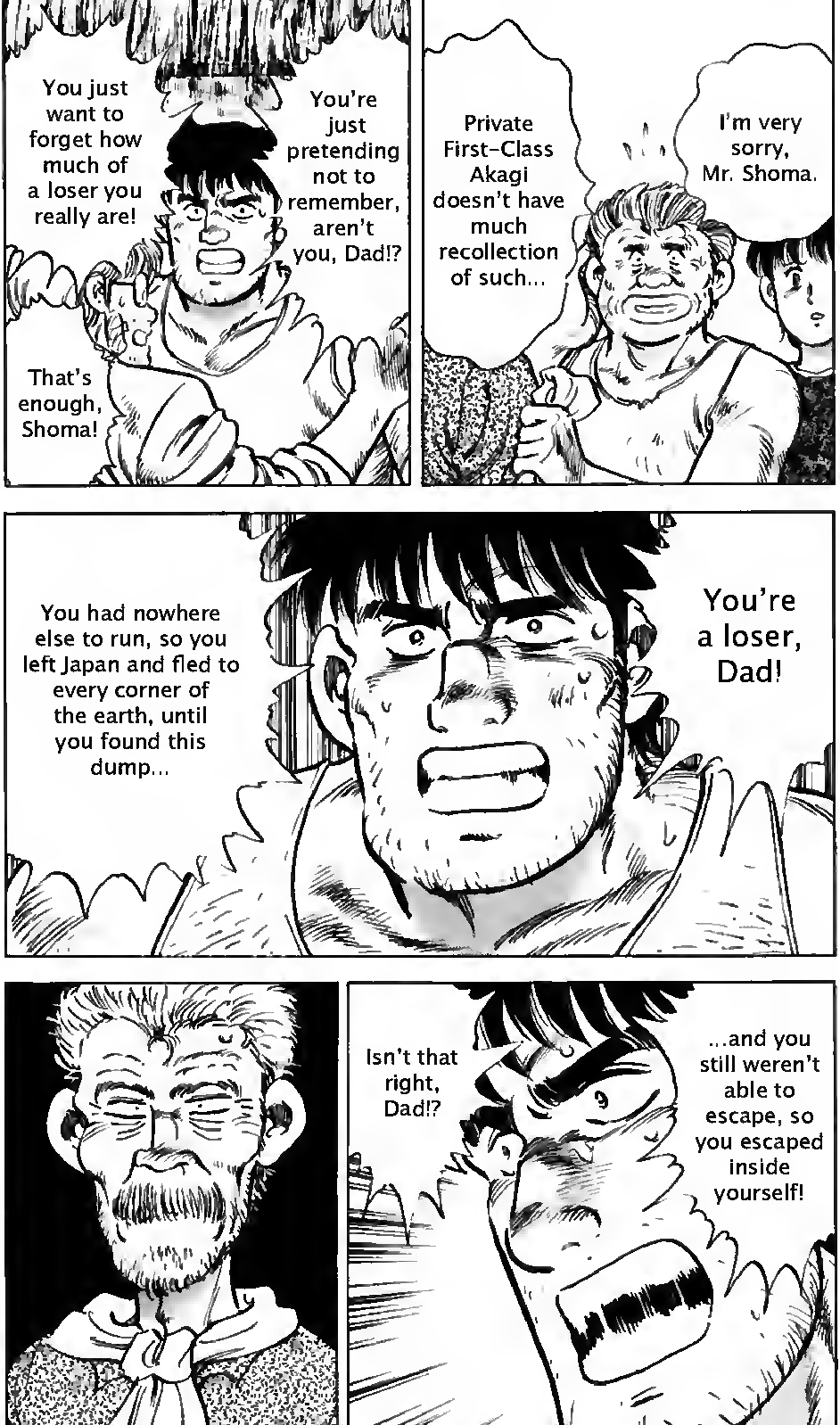

It's all because Dad was sloppy...

!?
Shoma ...
YAAAAY

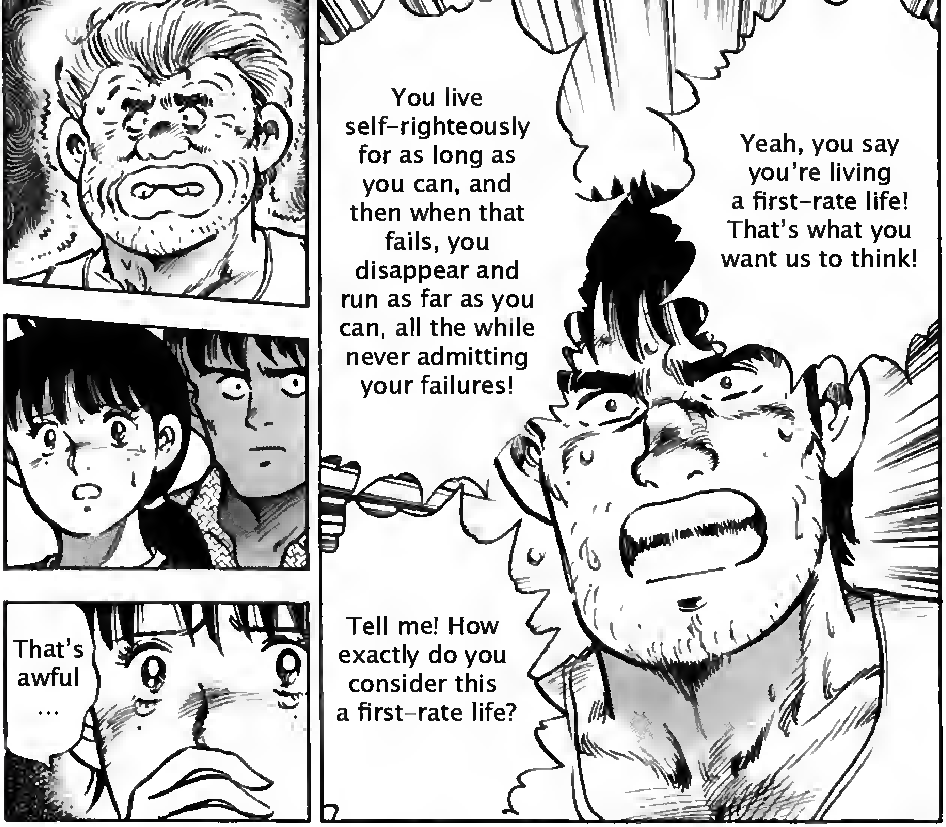
Hey, Dad!
Can you hear me, Dad!? There's something I wanna say to you!
You can't walk yet! Don't force yourself!
Huff...
Huff
Huff


What are you doing, Shoma? That man over there... He doesn't remember who we are.


I'm Shoma, the eldest son of the Akagi family!
I'm your son! I'm Shoma! Don't you remember me!?

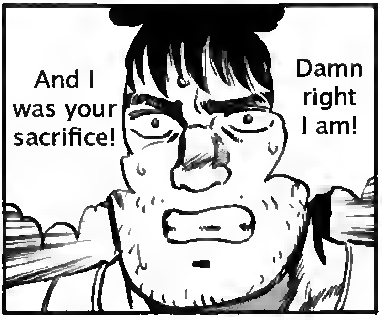

You just want to forget how much of a loser you really are!
You're just pretending not to remember, aren't you, Dad!?
That's enough, Shoma!
Private First-Class Akagi doesn't have much recollection of such...
I'm very sorry, Mr. Shoma.
You had nowhere else to run, so you left Japan and fled to every corner of the earth, until you found this dump...
You're a loser, Dad!
Isn't that right, Dad!?
...and you still weren't able to escape, so you escaped inside yourself!

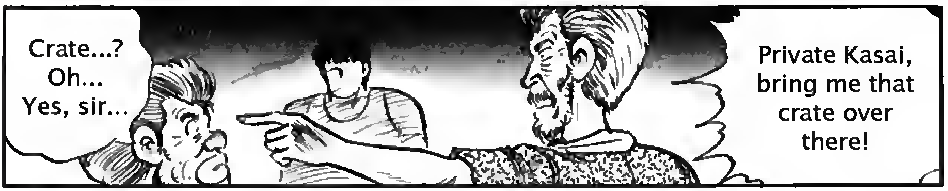
He's right, Shoma. Stop trying to torment him like that!
Just what are you trying say!?
Please, we've heard enough...
That said, we are still capable of contributing to this community!
We can dig wells and draw water, we can fertilize the soil, and we can grow crops!
This man has searched endlessly to find out what he is capable of! He is not running away from anything!
We are old men. We are just old men who have lost our status and our money!
...
I want an apology from you, Dad!
Is there anything wrong with that!?


You live self-righteously for as long as you can, and then when that fails, you disappear and run as far as you can, all the while never admitting your failures!
Yeah, you say you're living a first-rate life! That's what you want us to think!
Tell me! How exactly do you consider this a first-rate life?
That's awful ...

...my son?
Are you...

... surpassed me?
Have you...


And I was your sacrifice!
Damn right I am!

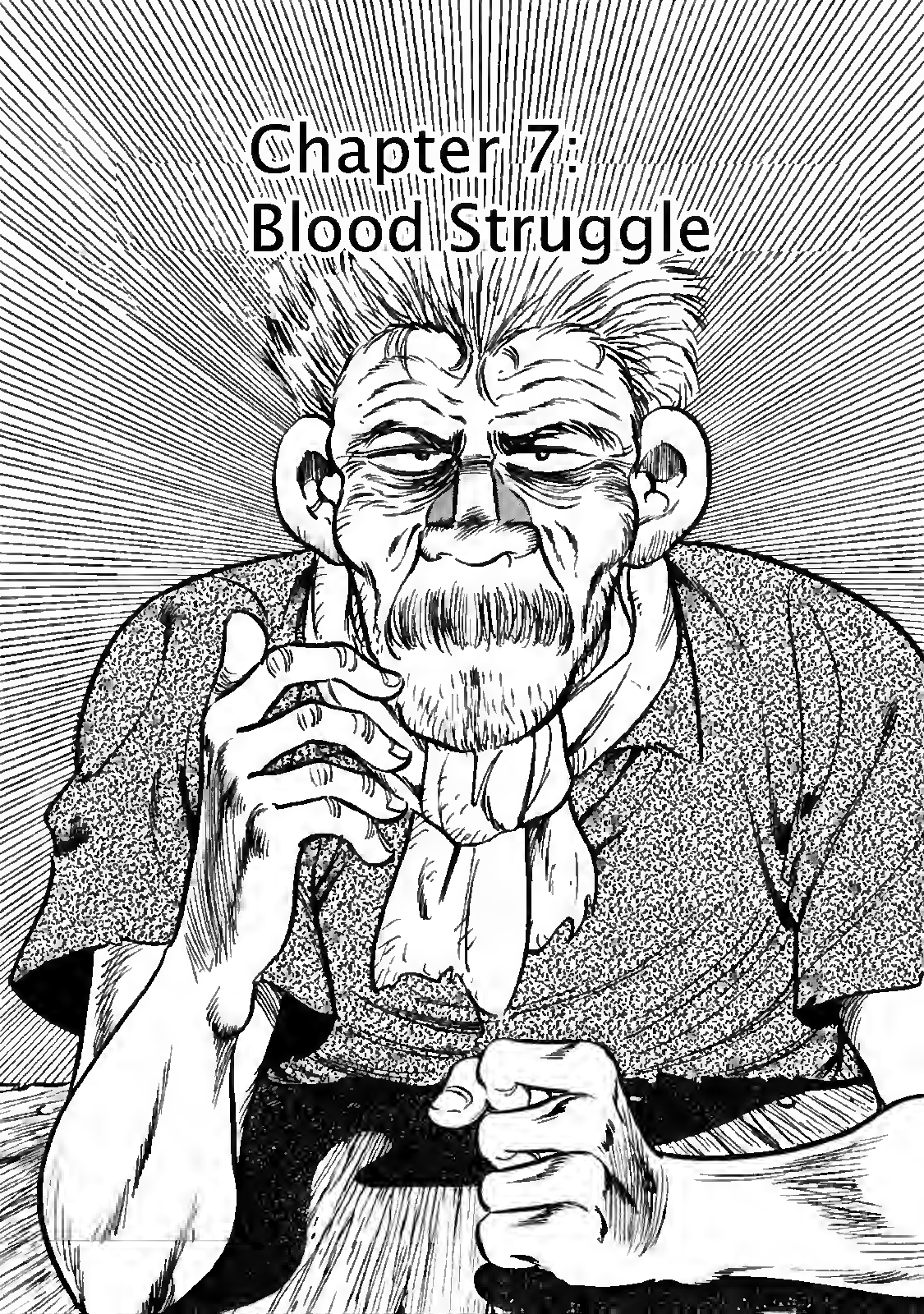

Crate...? Oh... Yes, sir...
Private Kasai, bring me that crate over there!

...my son...
Come...

THUD

Can you beat me?
We're going to arm wrestle.
!?
?
Mr. Akagi ...
B...But sir...!
Now come, my son.
If you can beat me, then I will apologize to you.

Chapter 7: Blood Struggle



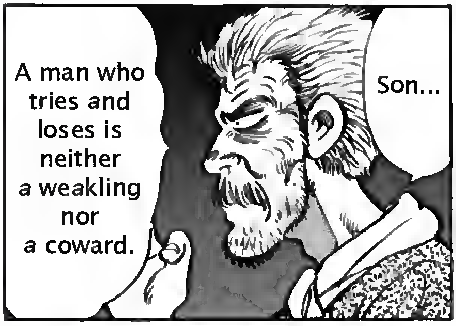
KRR
KRR
Mr. Akagi...
Come, my son.

Come,
my son.

KRR
KRR
Mr. Akagi...

He's right, Mr. Akagi. There's no need for this.
M...Mr. Akagi, this is absurd. Please don't do this.
I've had enough of this.
Tsk...
Won't you wrestle with me?
What's wrong, son?
...
You're senile... This is pointless.
WOO WOO
WOO

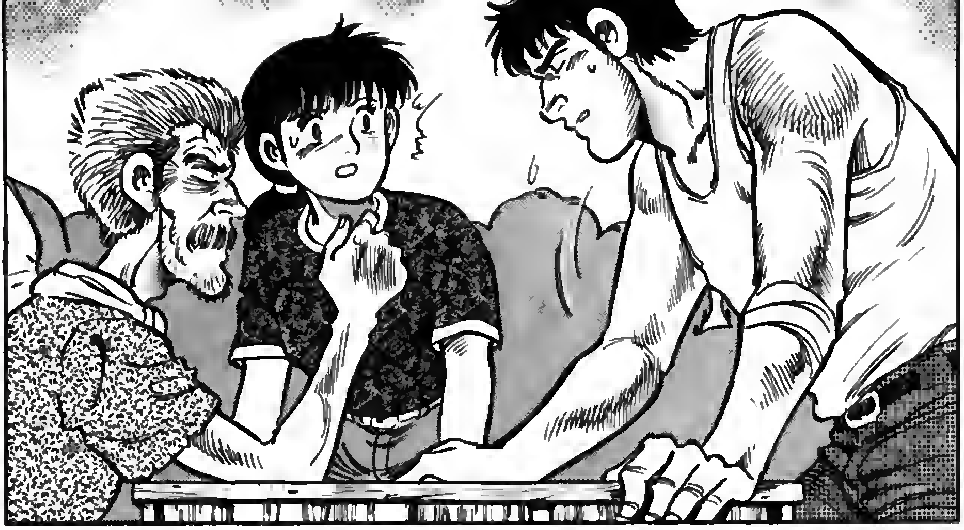
He's a coward! Haha! Chicken!
Do it Do it!
Don't chicken out! Do it!
Hahaha, he's weak! What a chicken!
He can't do it!
He can't do it!
He's backing out!

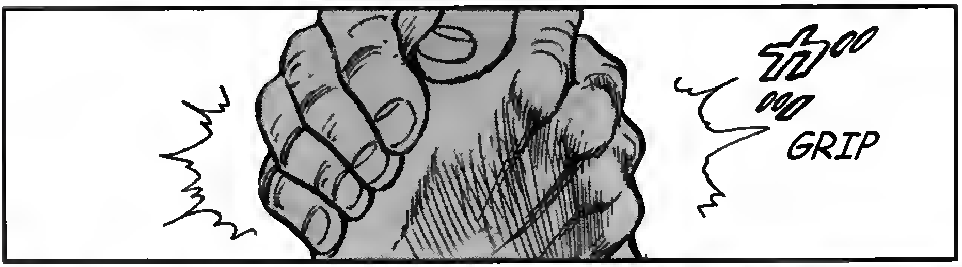

A man who tries and loses is neither a weakling nor a coward.
Son...

Move outta my way!
What the hell is this?

...
ㄷㄷㄷ
WOO
WOO

...are considered the real cowards.
Around these parts, those who run without putting up a fight...



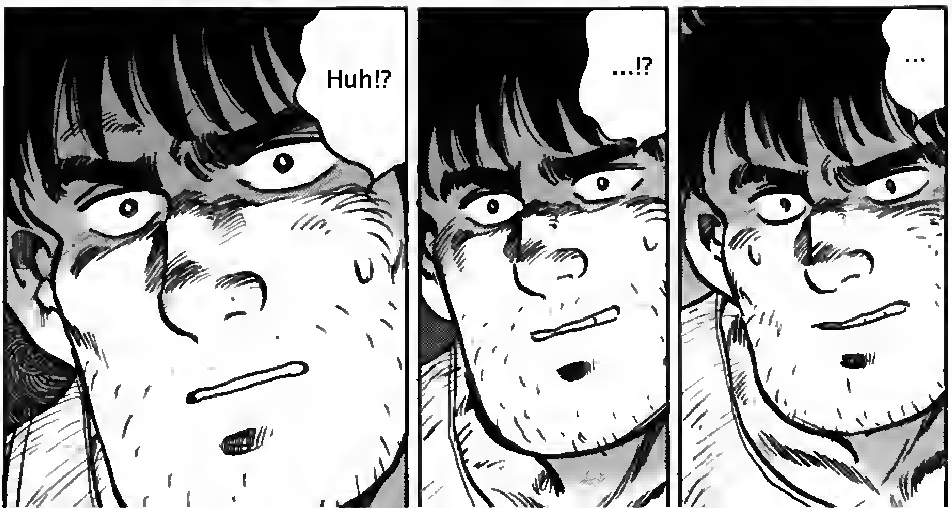

GRIP

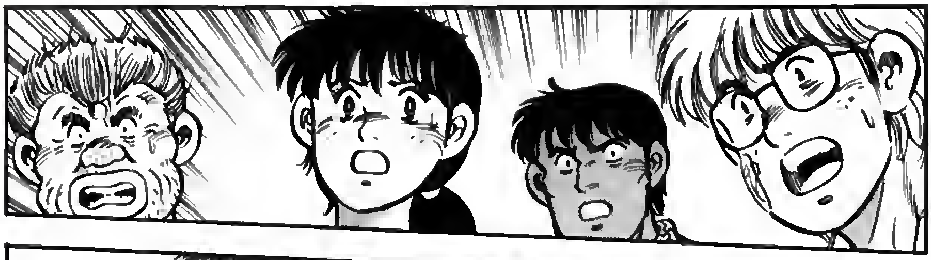
M...
Mr. Akagi
...

That's only if you win.
As promised, I'll be receiving my apology!

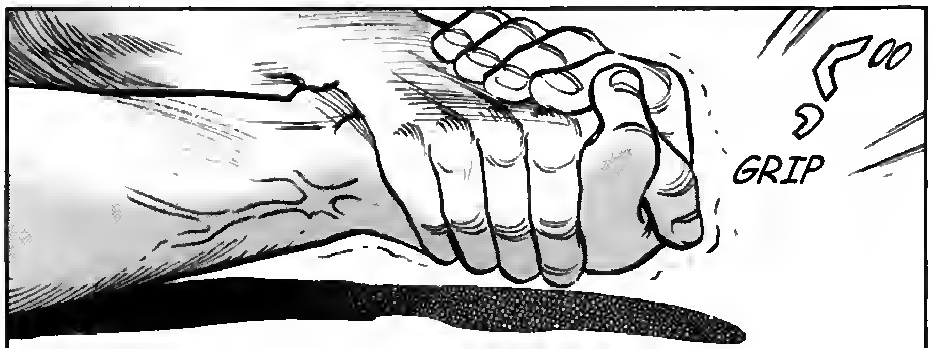
Ready, and... GO!

YEAHHH


Huh!?
...!?
...



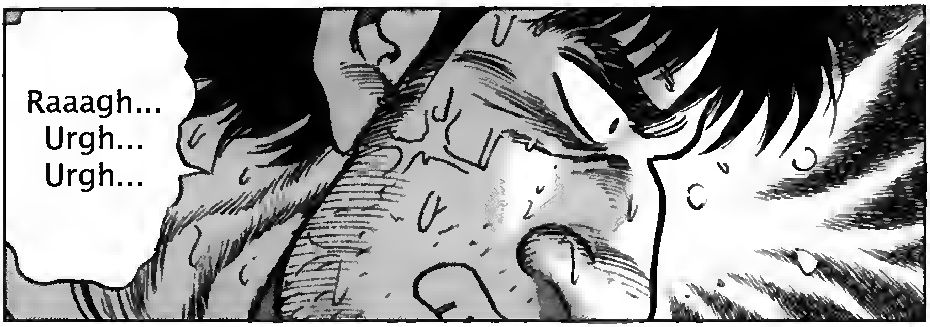
H...how could...!?

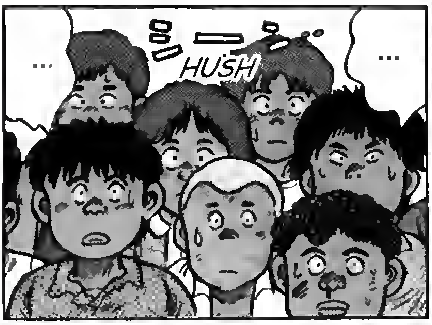

GRIP

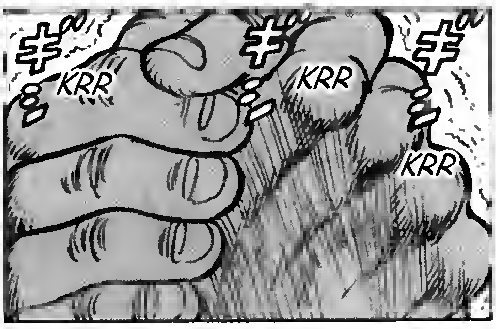
He's so strong ...
KRR KRR
He's so old... And yet...
That's impos- sible ...
I was a bit...
But no way I'm gonna lose!
... I'll ...
... unpre- pared, but...
KRRR
KRRRR

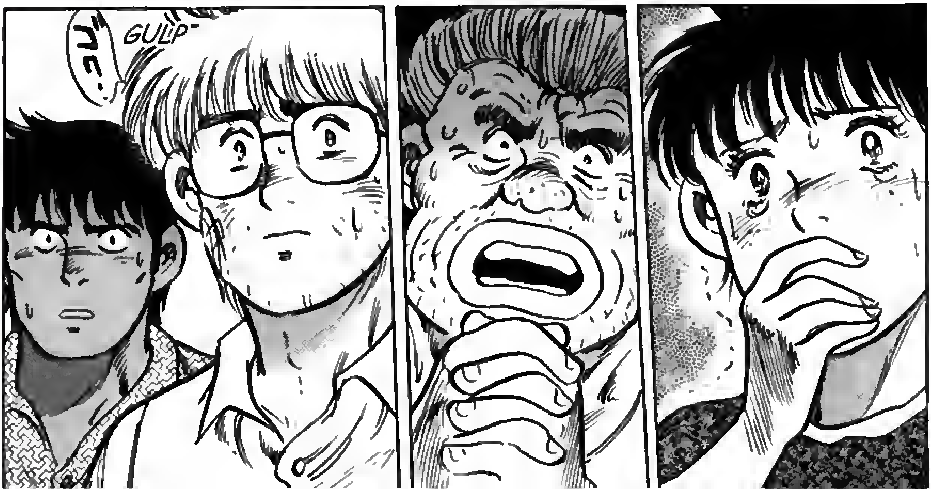
WOOO
He's makin' a comeback!
Dad...!
Sir...
Mr. Akagi ...
I'm younger... I should have more endur-ance...
Nng!
Hurgh!

Mmph...
Rrrrrgh...


Raaagh...
Urgh...
Urgh...


...
HUSH
...


KRR
KRR
KRR


GULP

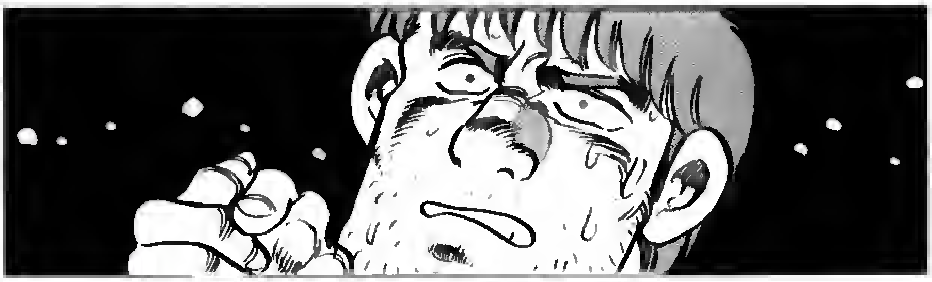
DRIP
DRIP
DRIP
It's over, Dad! I'll be getting my apology!
Rrrrgh... Rahhh...
Mr. Akagi!

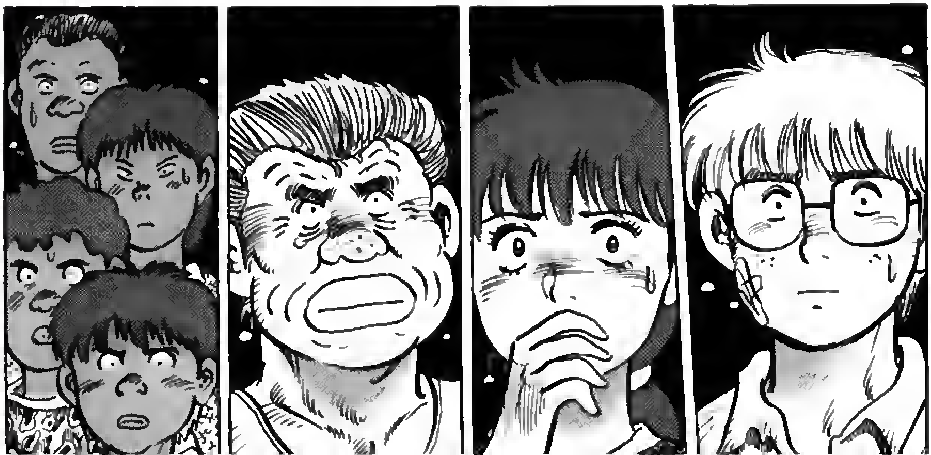
Hyaagh!
Huh!?
Hrrn.
GRRRT
Grahhh!
OOOH
おおお

Hraaaaagh!
Hrgh...
Hraagh...
Huffff...
Huff...
Huff...
Huff...
Huff...
Who is this man even...? He's a monster...!
Presi-dent Akagi ...!
Amazing...
We're not even a match for him!
That's right, Shoma! This is Dad's true strength!

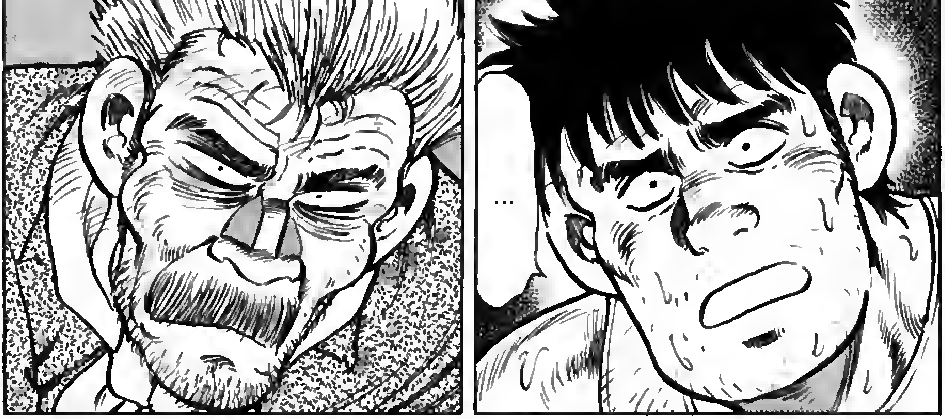
Rrrrrngh...
Huffff
...
Hnngh
...
Oof...
Grahh
...
Grahh
...
Urgh
...
Urgh
...
Urgh
...
...
Y...
Hrrrrrng...

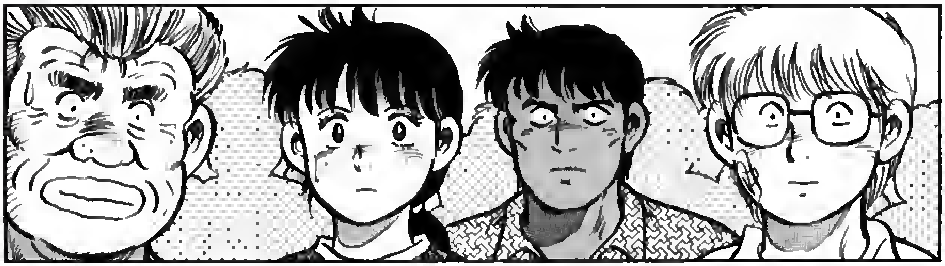
You wrestle ...
...like a little punk!





WHAAAM
ドォォ

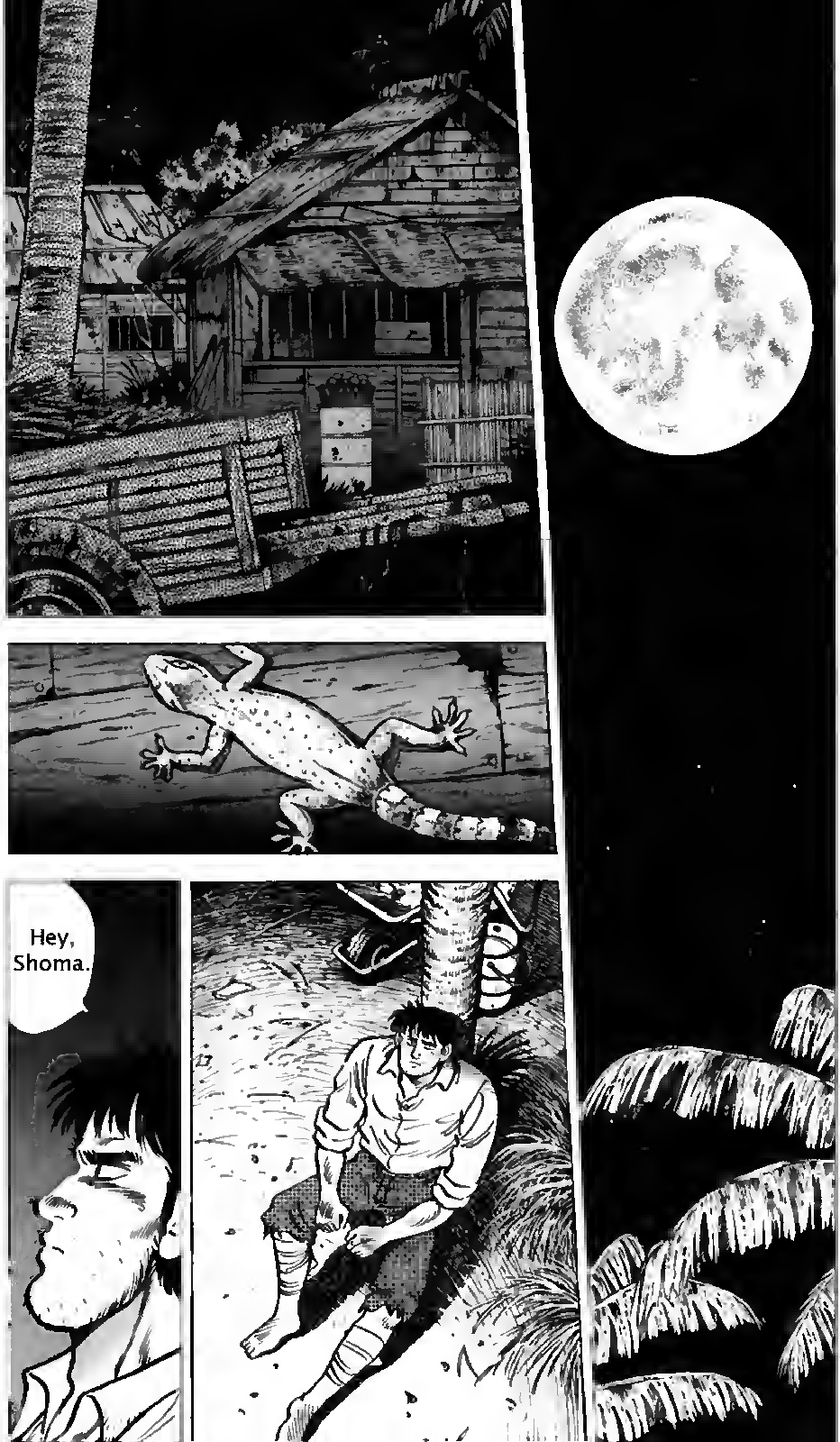

...



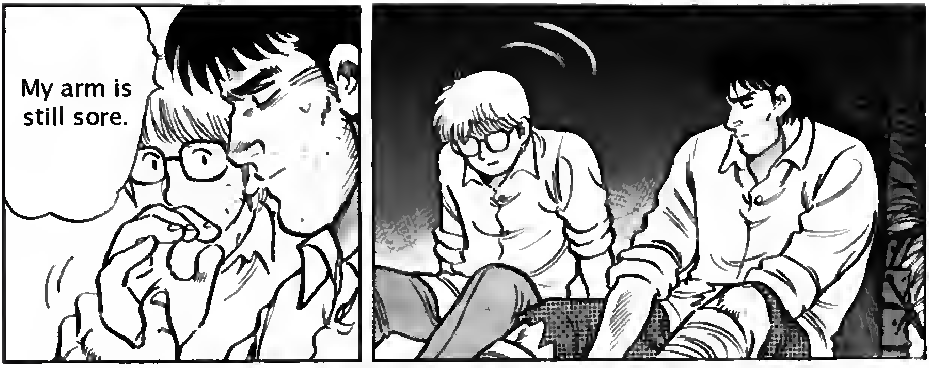
PAT
PAT

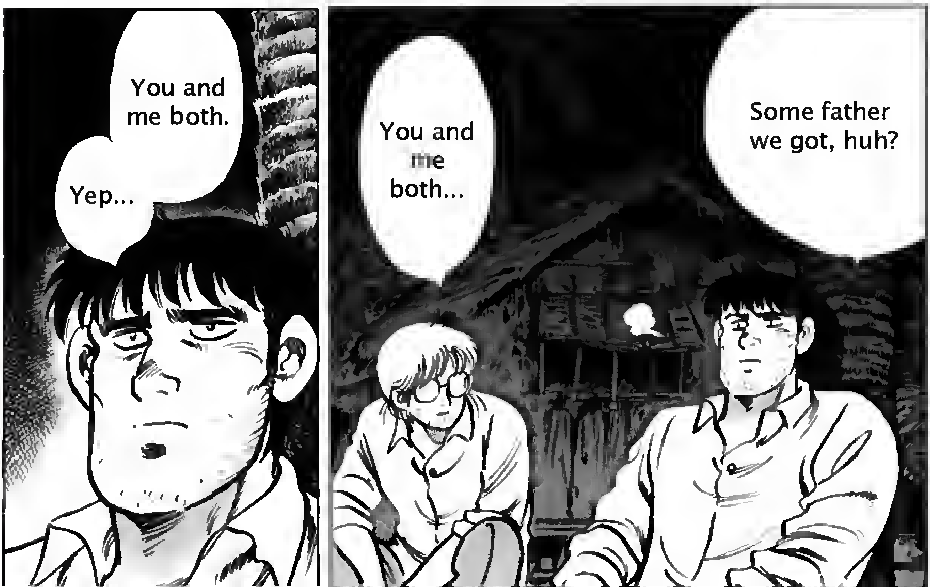
You got
a long way
to go!

Chapter 8:
Rematch


Hey, Shoma.

Same here.
No...
Can't sleep?

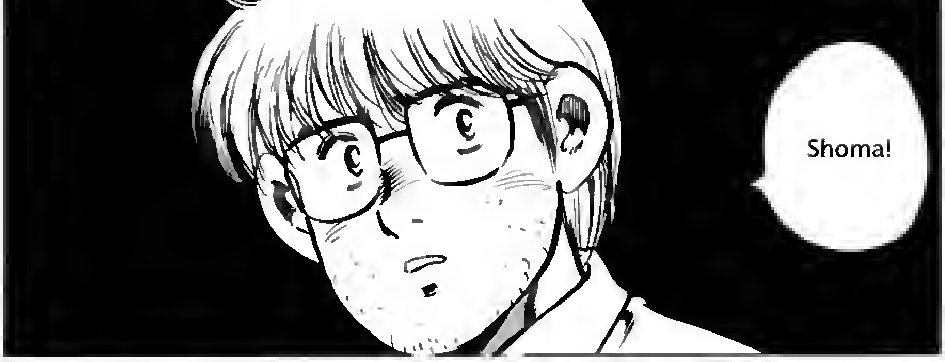

My arm is still sore.


You and me both.
Yep...
You and me both...
Some father we got, huh?

I wasn't obedient. I just sort of disregarded it all.
You were always obedient.
Looking back...
...today was the first time I ever challenged Dad directly.
Yeah. I didn't hate him. I didn't love him.
Disre-garded !?
I guess I was afraid of him...
I just went on disregard-ing him.
...
So I just disre-garded him...
I was afraid to know him. I was afraid of knowing him and realizing that I was indeed afraid of him.

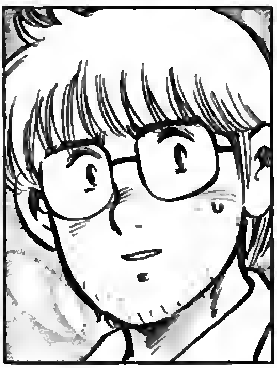
In my case, fear and admiration were the same thing.
I always thought you admired him.
I never realized that.
I was probably just...
Why did I loathe him so much?
To tell you the truth...
Before I even realized it, I think I might have developed a disdain for him, because he was younger...
...trying to shift my fear of Dad over to Gunma.
...I've actually been thinking about Gunma all night.
Carbon copies.
Yeah ...
Dad and Gunma are a lot alike, after all.

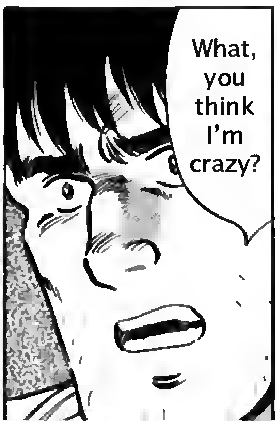
The battle hasn't even begun yet. Why should I accept defeat this early in the game?
Defeat?
I didn't think you'd accept defeat so easily, Shoma.
You know, I was a bit disappointed.
!?
Thanks to the wrestling match, I finally have a grasp of who my opponent really is.
I may have lost in arm wrestling, but that was just the beginning.
The real fight has only just begun!
Someday, I'm going to beat that great man!
I'm not gonna live in idle fear of Dad anymore. I'm gonna take a good look at who he really is, and then challenge him to a rematch!

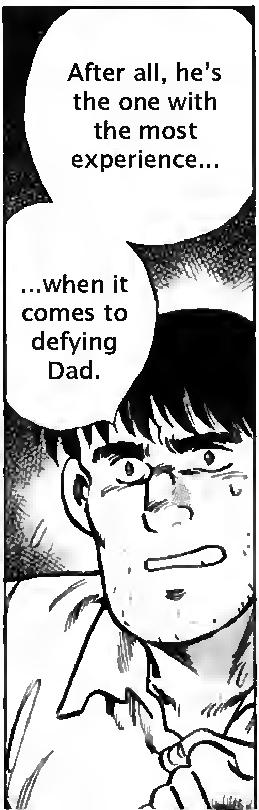

Shoma!

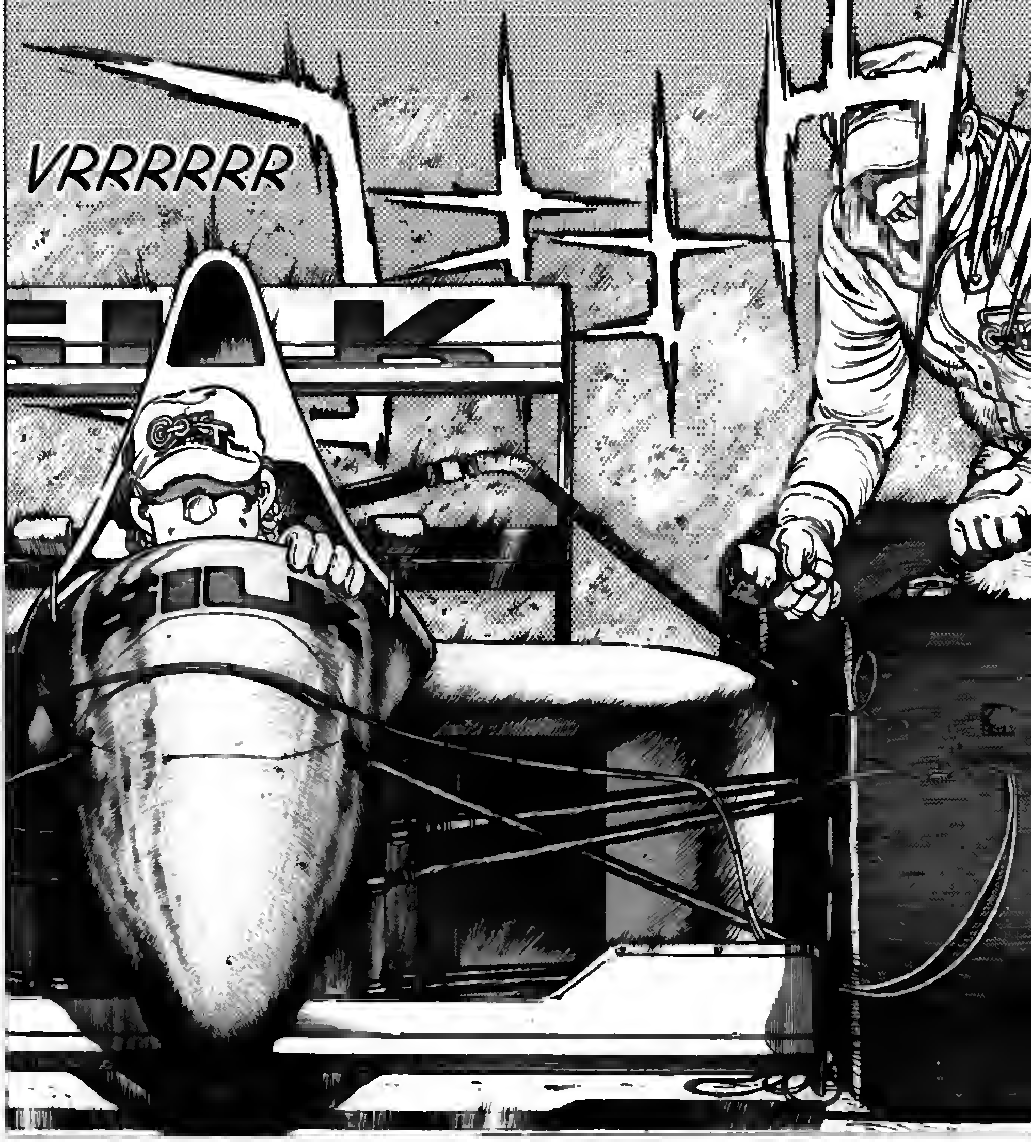
I'm gonna watch him, and I'm gonna find a way to challenge Dad!
You mean Gun-ma?
That's right, Yuma. I'm gonna go pay Gunma a visit!

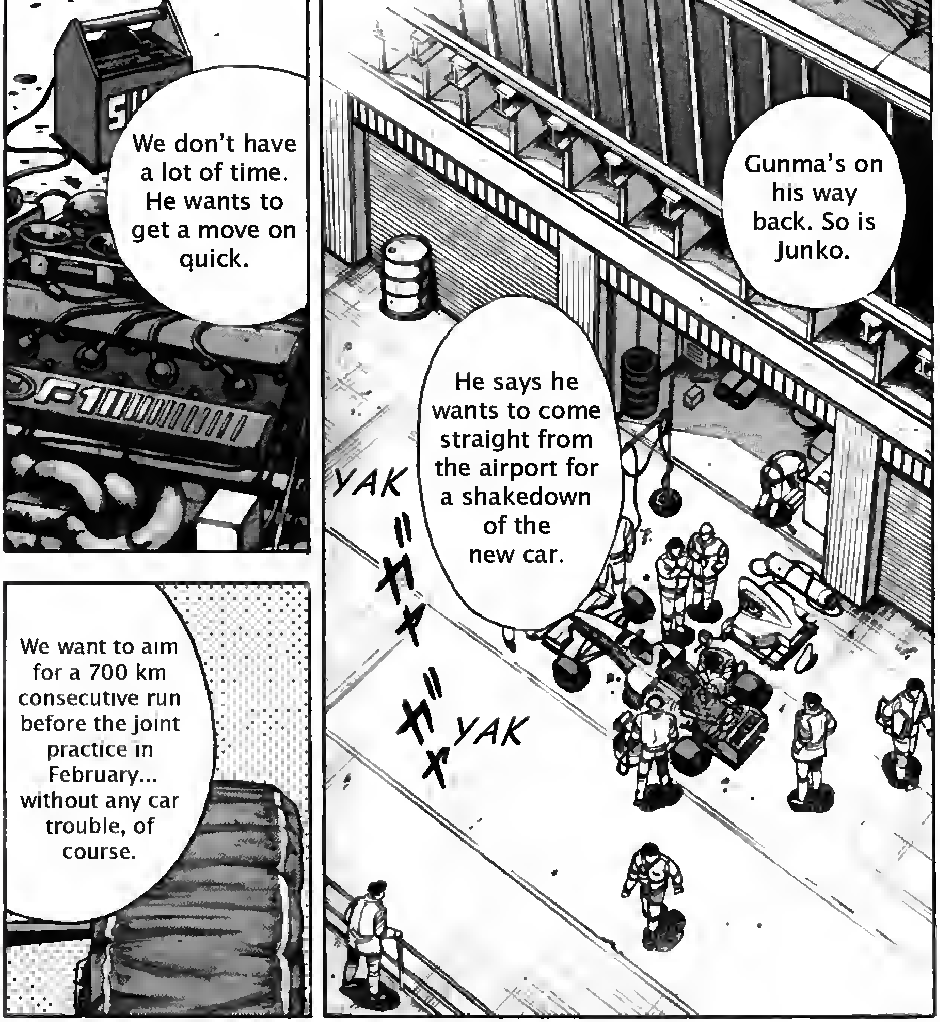
No, I don't think you are.
You're not crazy...

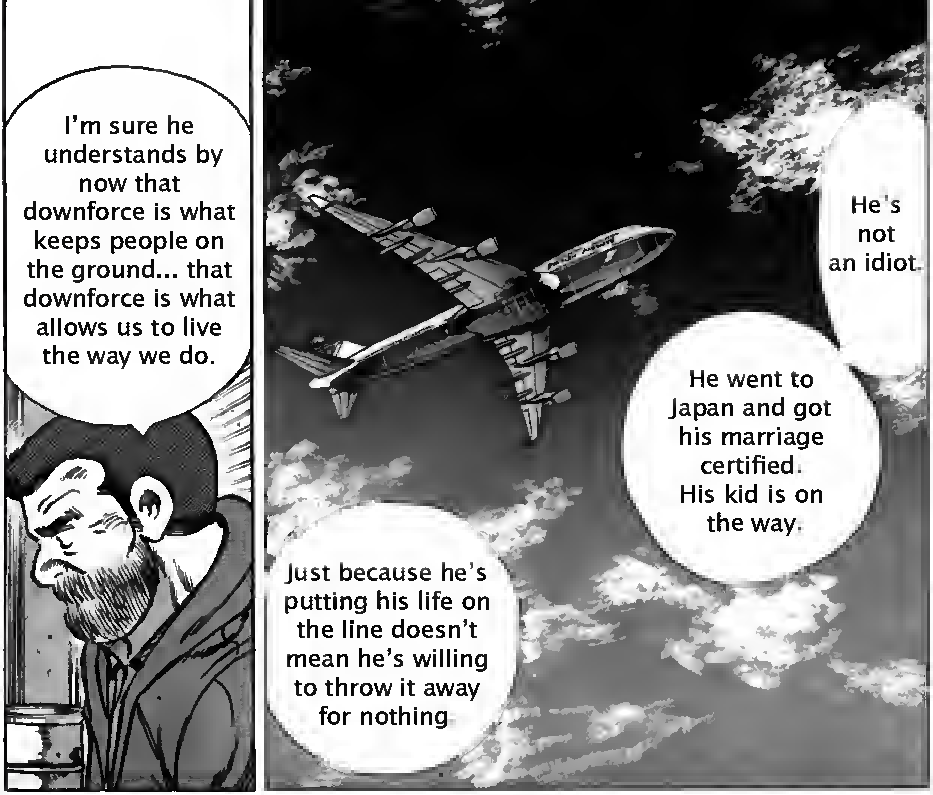


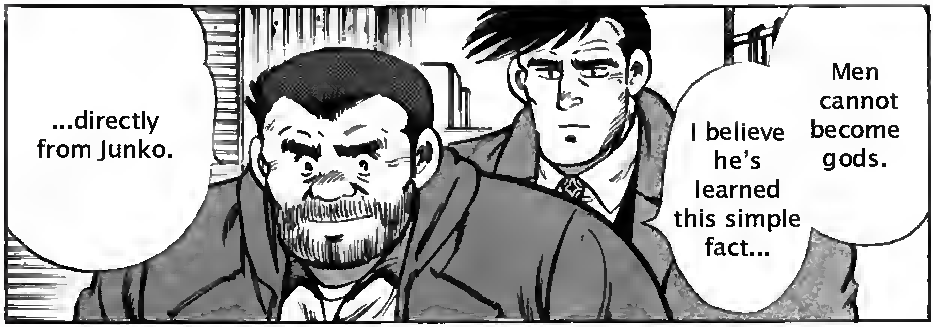

What, you think I'm crazy?


After all, he's the one with the most experience...
...when it comes to defying Dad.


VRRRRRR


We don't have a lot of time. He wants to get a move on quick.
Gunma's on his way back. So is Junko.
He says he wants to come straight from the airport for a shakedown of the new car.
YAK
YAK
We want to aim for a 700 km consecutive run before the joint practice in February... without any car trouble, of course.
Well...
700 km!? How do you plan on managing that when an 8 km straight sends this thing flying?
That's where we'll find that "compromise" we've been looking for!

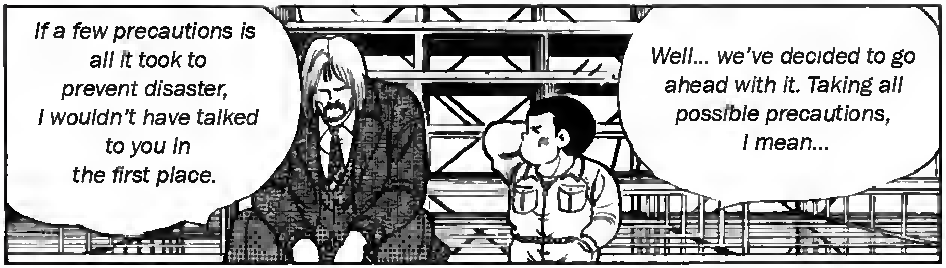

I'm sure he understands by now that downforce is what keeps people on the ground... that downforce is what allows us to live the way we do.
He's not an idiot.
He went to Japan and got his marriage certified. His kid is on the way.
Just because he's putting his life on the line doesn't mean he's willing to throw it away for nothing

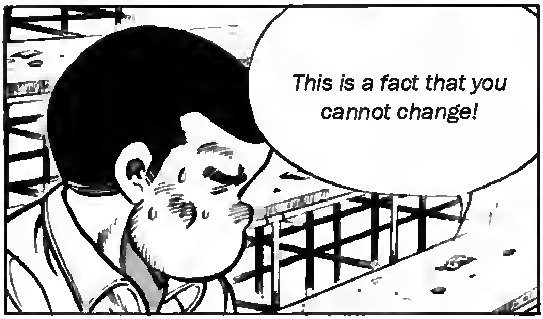

...directly from Junko.
I believe he's learned this simple fact...
Men cannot become gods.

There's someone on the stands by the first corner, Orman.
...turned out to be a wise decision, after all.
I guess that means my blabbing about Junko's pregnancy...

Speak of the Devil... Or the son of God himself, in this case.
He looks like he wants to talk.
Why me?
You go talk to him.
Huh? Oh. Okay.
Tamotsu, go talk to him!
RIP

Have you passed my warning onto your team?
RIP
RIP
Uhh, yeah, I did tell them.
Then why does it look like you're still planning to race?


Well... we've decided to go ahead with it. Taking all possible precautions, I mean...
If a few precautions is all it took to prevent disaster, I wouldn't have talked to you in the first place.


This is a fact that you cannot change!

It appears you still don't understand.
The future is predetermined!

If he... If Gunma Akagi enters the race, he'll lose his life.
That's why I'm here.

I don't know. But we can at least avoid blood being spilled on the circuit.
So if Gunma doesn't race, he'll be saved?
Jesus, if the future is predetermined, then do we even have the right to tell Gunma not to enter the race?
!?
I almost said the same thing to a certain racer.
Mr. Hijiri...
Years ago...
I...
Those are words that should not come out of the mouth of a man who loves racing.
Listen to me, Tamotsu. The circuit is not a graveyard!

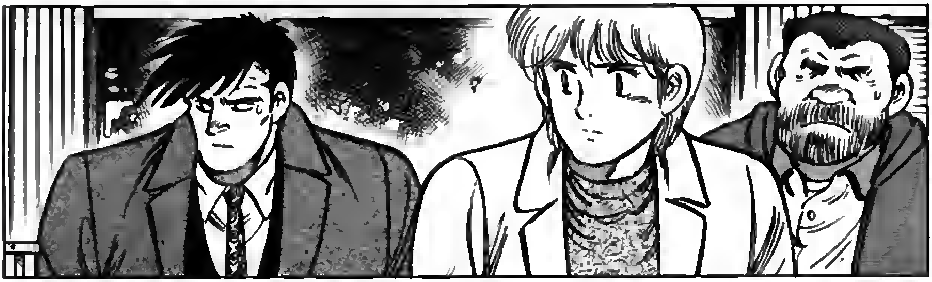
I suppose there's nothing I can do to stop you, Mr. Hijiri...
I'm going to live free until I die!
Nobody can stop me, Tamotsu...
That's right! Even if it is impossible to alter Gunma's destiny, we must not turn the circuit into a place of tragedy.
The circuit is not a graveyard.
But I think that... even as powerless human beings, we have one right that not even God can deprive us of!
A right...!?
If...
...the future...
...is something we can't change, something chosen by God, then there's nothing to be done.

That's absolute nonsense...
!?
The right to live our lives until we die!
...I couldn't stop him, either.
It's true. That time, years back...
You're sick in the head and so is your entire team!
!!
FWOOOM

FWOOOOSH

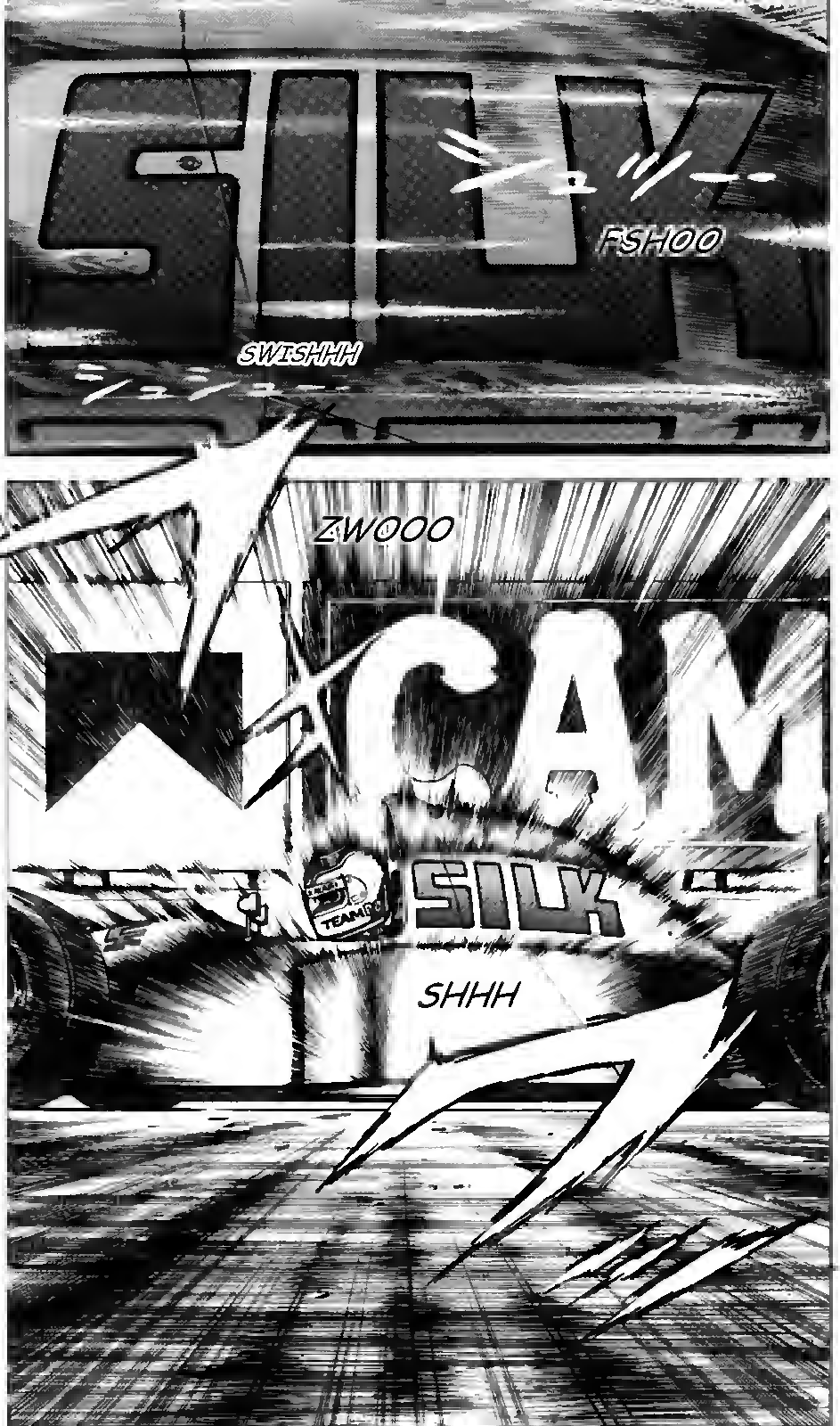
FWOOOOSH

!!
Gu...
Gunma...!
AKAG
GUNMA AKAGI



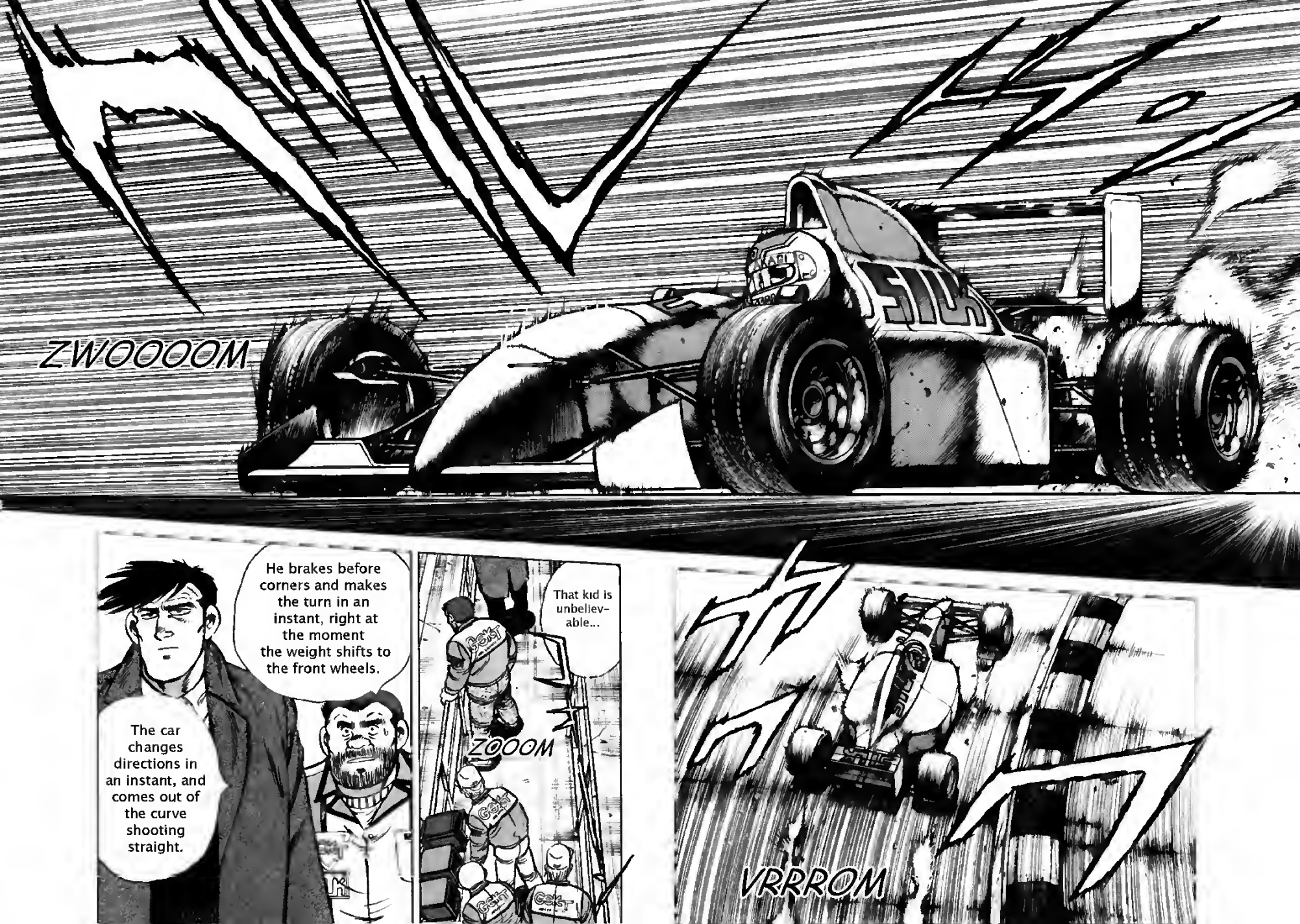
...
I'm makin' a prophecy too, Jesus!
I prophesy that Gunma won't die on my watch!
I swear it...
BADUMP

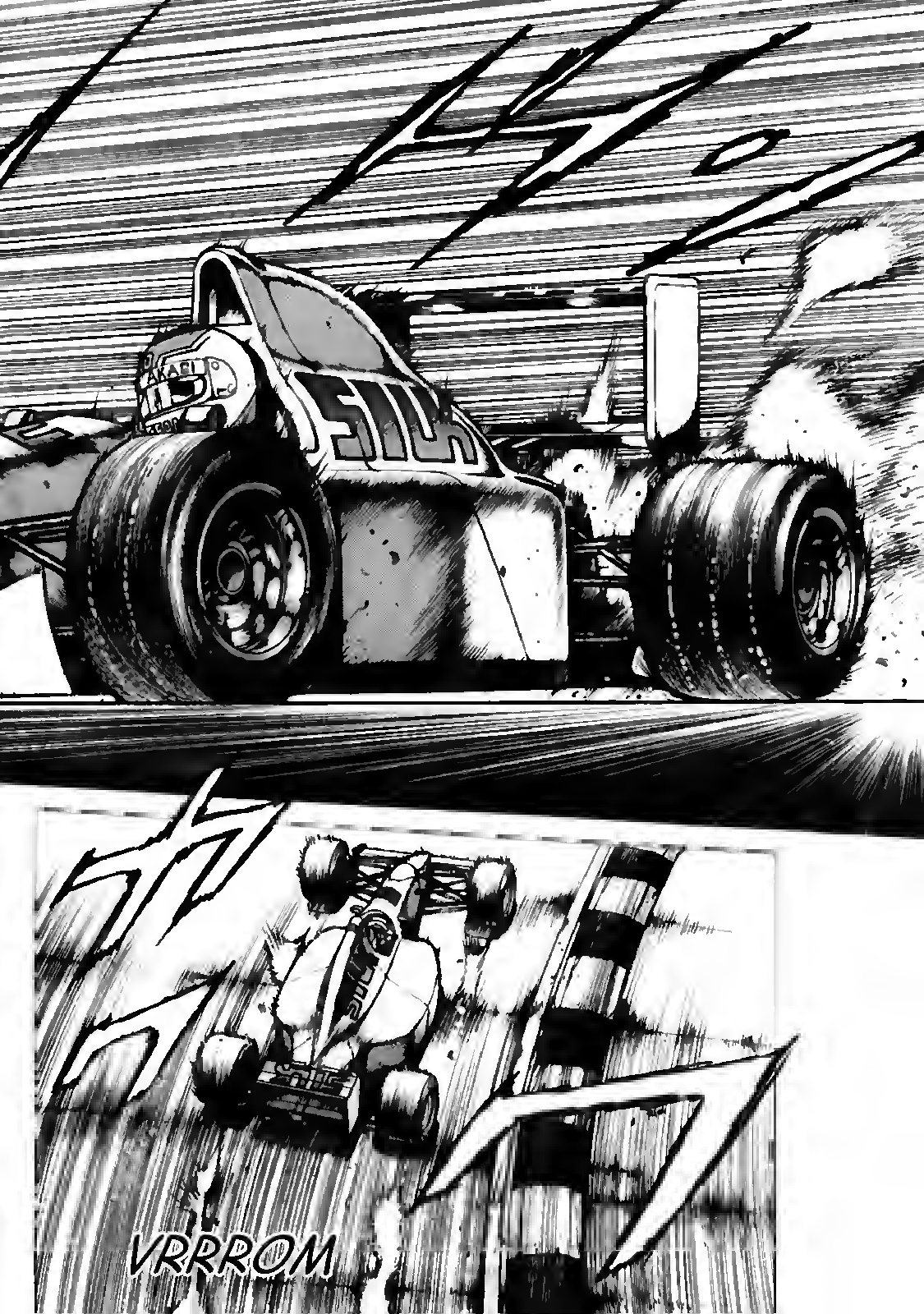
Chapter 9:
Sneering Shadow


SILK
FSHOO
SWISHHH
ZWOOO
SILK
SHHH

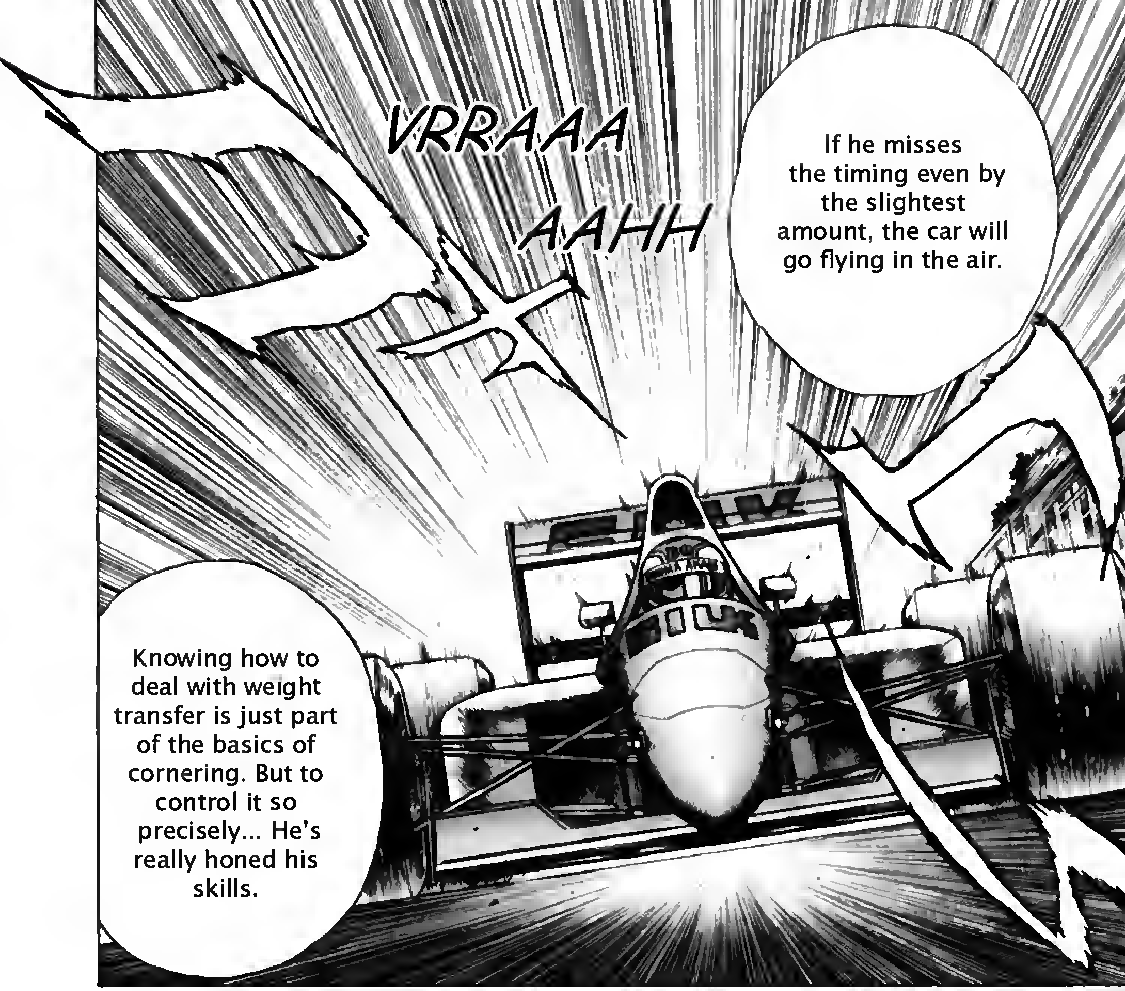
SHOOOOOM

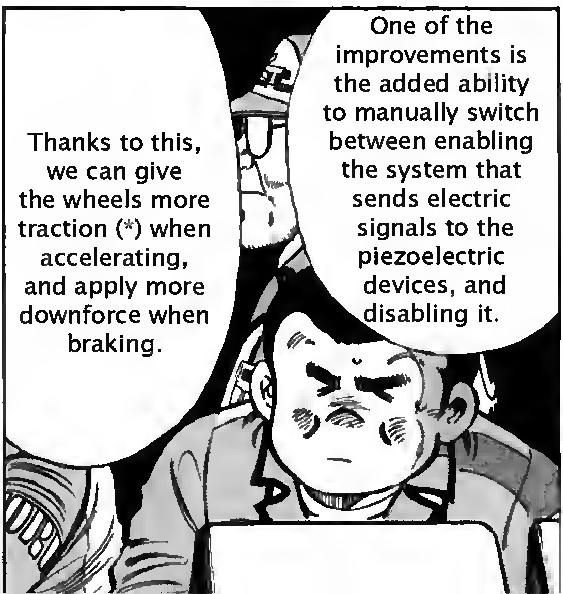
ZWOOOM
TAP

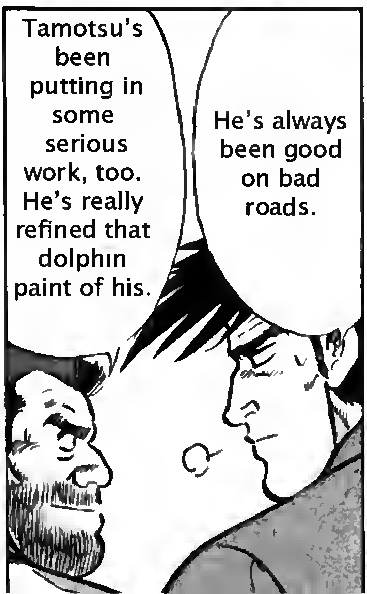

ZWOOOOM
He brakes before corners and makes the turn in an instant, right at the moment the weight shifts to the front wheels.
The car changes directions in an instant, and comes out of the curve shooting straight.
That kid is unbelievable...
ZOOOM
VRRROM


AKARI
VRROM

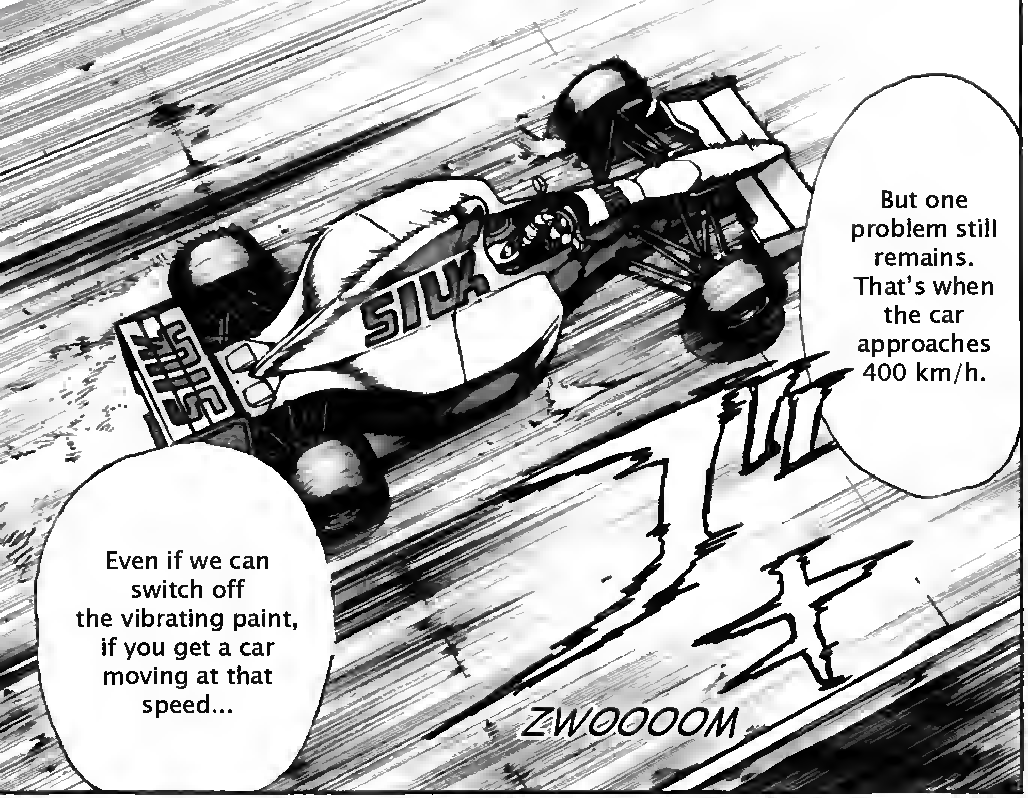
ZWOOOOM
He brakes before corners and makes the turn in an instant, right at the moment the weight shifts to the front wheels.
The car changes directions in an instant, and comes out of the curve shooting straight.
That kid is unbelievable...
ZOOOM


VRRAAA
AAHH
If he misses the timing even by the slightest amount, the car will go flying in the air.
Knowing how to deal with weight transfer is just part of the basics of cornering. But to control it so precisely... He's really honed his skills.

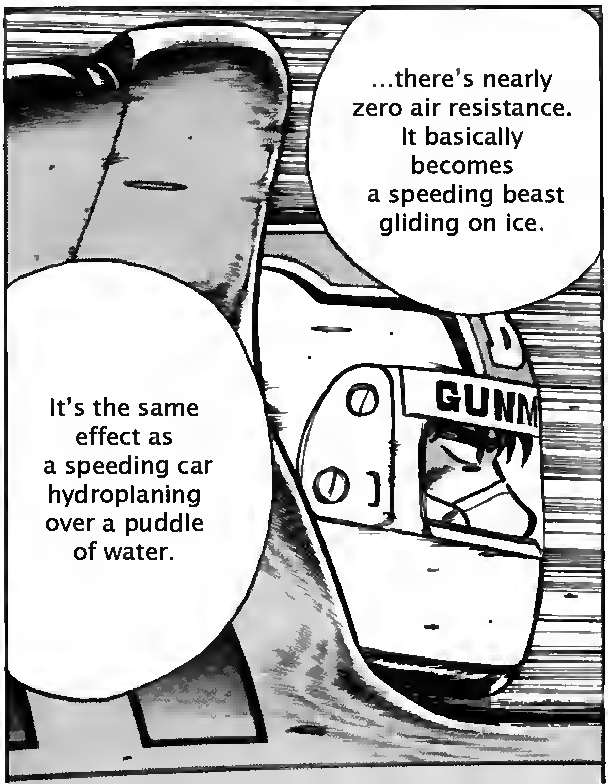

Thanks to this, we can give the wheels more traction (*) when accelerating, and apply more downforce when braking.
One of the improvements is the added ability to manually switch between enabling the system that sends electric signals to the piezoelectric devices, and disabling it.


Tamotsu's been putting in some serious work, too. He's really refined that dolphin paint of his.
He's always been good on bad roads.

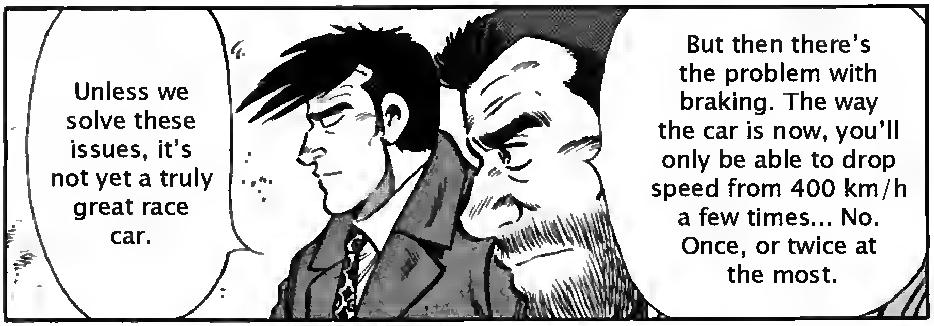
* Traction is the force that keeps a moving object pulled against a surface.


But one problem still remains. That's when the car approaches 400 km/h.
Even if we can switch off the vibrating paint, if you get a car moving at that speed...
ZWOOOOM

The wheels don't work, the car swings right and left... At this point, the driver is not in control. You don't know which direction the car will go


...there's nearly zero air resistance. It basically becomes a speeding beast gliding on ice.
It's the same effect as a speeding car hydroplaning over a puddle of water.

You won't be able to pull it off at most circuits. You need a very long straight. You have to counterbalance the downforce needed for traction against air resistance. Then, you finally get there.
Anyhow, going 400 km/h is an extreme case.


Unless we solve these issues, it's not yet a truly great race car.
But then there's the problem with braking. The way the car is now, you'll only be able to drop speed from 400 km/h a few times... No. Once, or twice at the most.

He plans to pass that smirking black shadow running ahead of him, and he only needs one chance!
Yeah, but that kid is willing to bet it all on that one chance.

That's to be faster than anything, and to pass everything running ahead of him!
He's only got one goal in mind...
He couldn't care less about winning or becoming champion.
So... It's a make-or-break game, huh?

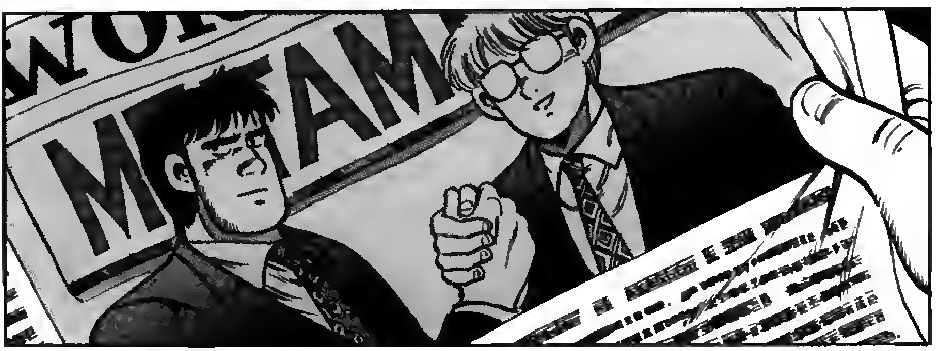
SHOOOM
And...?
What comes
after that?

Team Metamorphose takes on F1! A Renault V10 engine mounted on a new chassis! The two brothers unite to provide sponsorship!

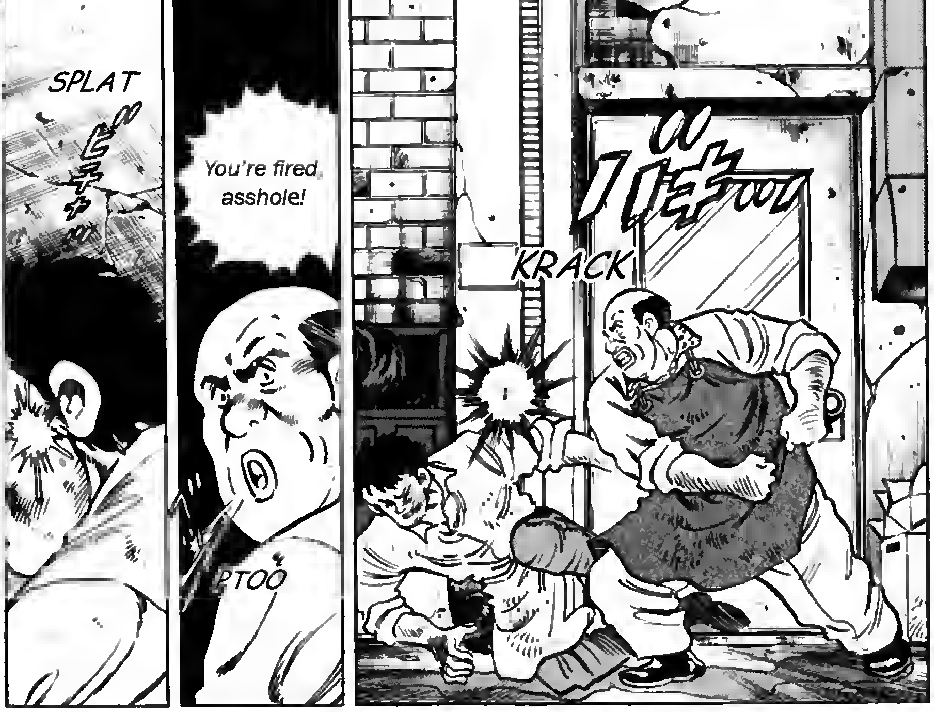
チーム

メタモルフォーゼF1参戦!

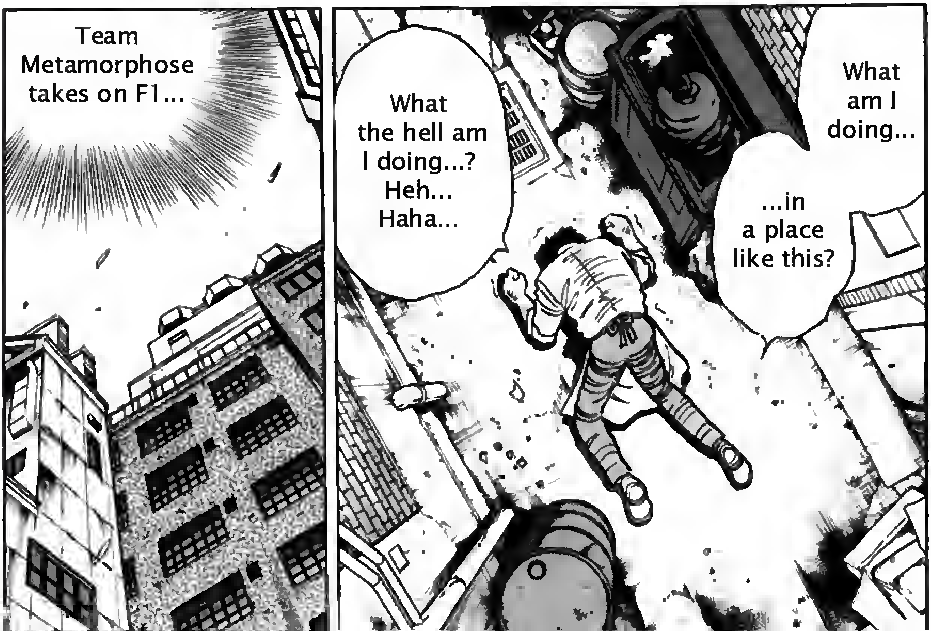
ルノーV10エンジンの供給を得、ニューシャシーに搭載! 資金面をささえる肉親の絆!



...
Whatd'ya mean "huh"!? Don't you see that huge pile of dishes in front of ya!?
Huh?
You listenin' boy!? Eh!?
Team Metamorphose takes on F1...
KRAASHHH
FLING FLING
KRASHHH KRUNCH
Why you... Son of a...
Heh heh... What the hell am I doing here?
WOBBLE
KRRSHHH
KRSHH


SPLAT
You're fired asshole!
PTOO
KRACK

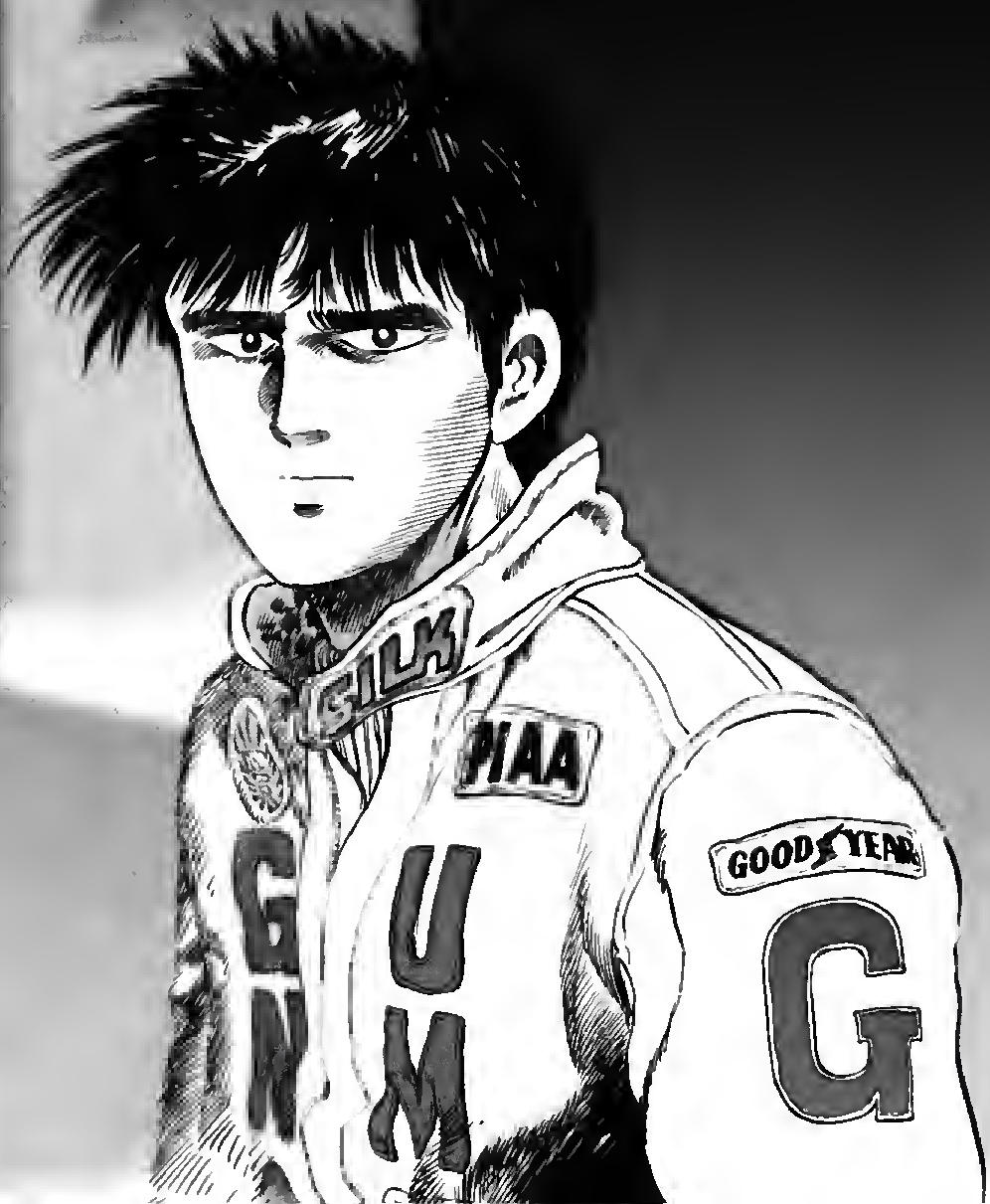
Heh... Heh heh...
Heh heh...
Heh...


Team Metamorphose takes on F1...
What the hell am I doing...? Heh... Haha...
What am I doing...
...in a place like this?

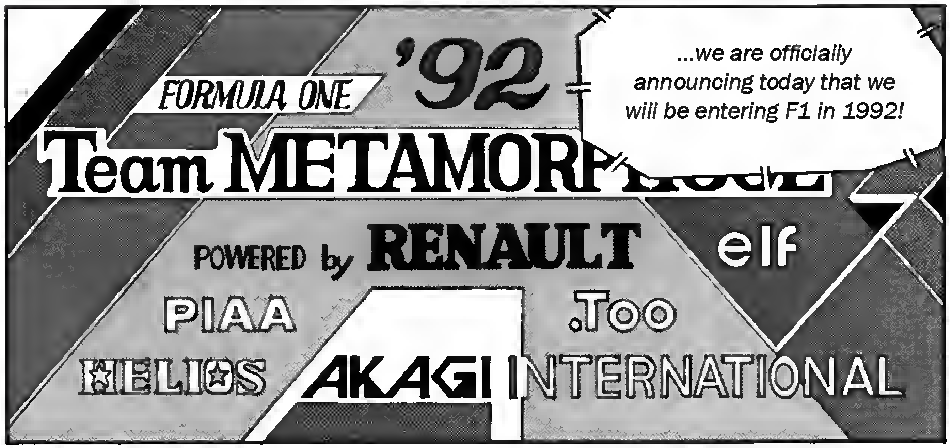
Bye-bye Champion♡
ギィィ・・・
KREEE
キ"
KRR
THUD
Even that hooker ditched me.
Tsk ...
Bye bye, champ-pion ... Heh...
Damn it!
What in the hell am I doing ...?
Seri-ously...

ピチャ…
PLAT
I'm not lettin' you enter F1 by your-self...!
Damn you Yuma...
SMASHH
Champ

Chapter 10: Diligence



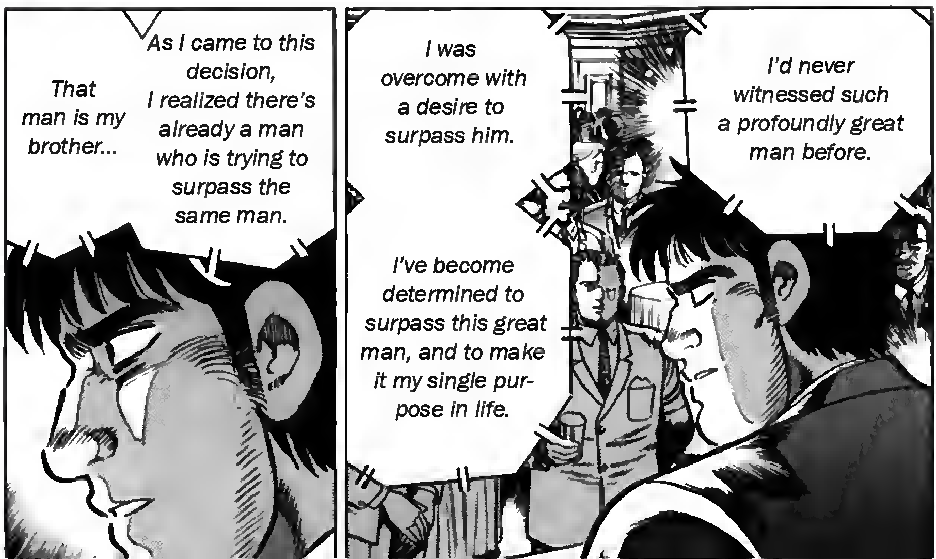
Our team has had our sights set on F1 ever since the beginning.
With our financial backing, the strengthening of our team and the provision of a Renault engine...


FORMULA ONE '92
...we are officially announcing today that we will be entering F1 in 1992!
Team METAMORPHOSE
POWERED by RENAULT
elf
PIAA
.Too
HELIOS
AKAGI INTERNATIONAL

We announced to the press the other day...
...but I would like to take this opportunity now to introduce the team, and to send out our message.
'92
Team METAMORPHOSE

Team Metamorphose was founded by my brother Yuma, using money he took out of our company.
At the time, I had no interest in formula racing.
METAMOR
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP

I didn't get excited about cars passing cars on a circuit.
But just the other day... I encountered a truly great man.


That man is my brother...
As I came to this decision, I realized there's already a man who is trying to surpass the same man.
I was overcome with a desire to surpass him.
I've become determined to surpass this great man, and to make it my single purpose in life.
I'd never witnessed such a profoundly great man before.

Gunma Akagi!
I'm sure all of you involved in formula racing are familiar with the name.
He too will be racing in F1 this year with a different team.
...to face Gunma Akagi, a man who is charging one step ahead of me.
I will do whatever it takes to face him, and to challenge him.
This is the reason why I've decided to join this team.
Sadly for me, I do not know how to go about surpassing this great man... nor do I think that's something that can easily be accomplished.
That's why I've decided...

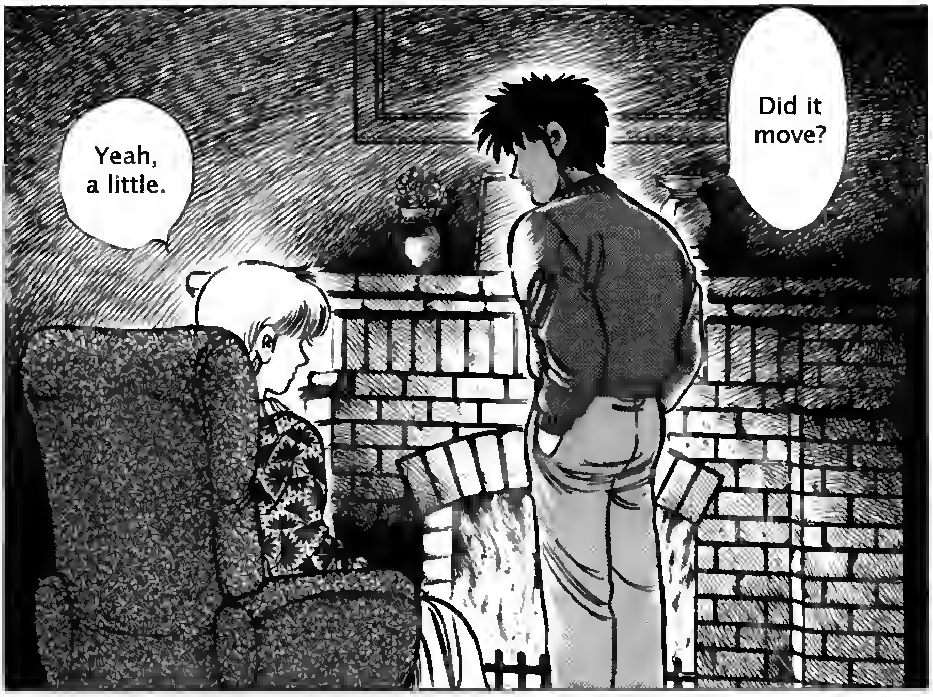
I am absolutely determined to reach the heights of this great man, and surpass him!
And by bettering ourselves, and improving ourselves...
I am determined to face off against Gunma Akagi on the circuit, no matter what it takes.

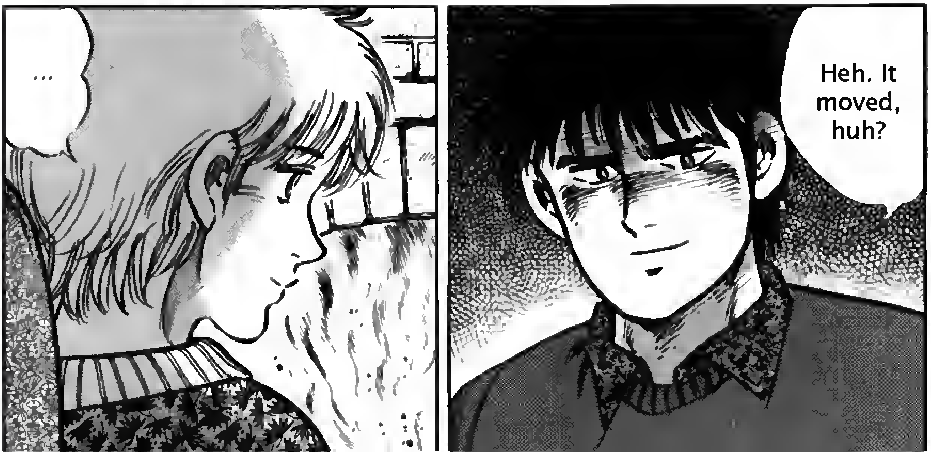
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP

Yes.
Beautiful moon tonight...

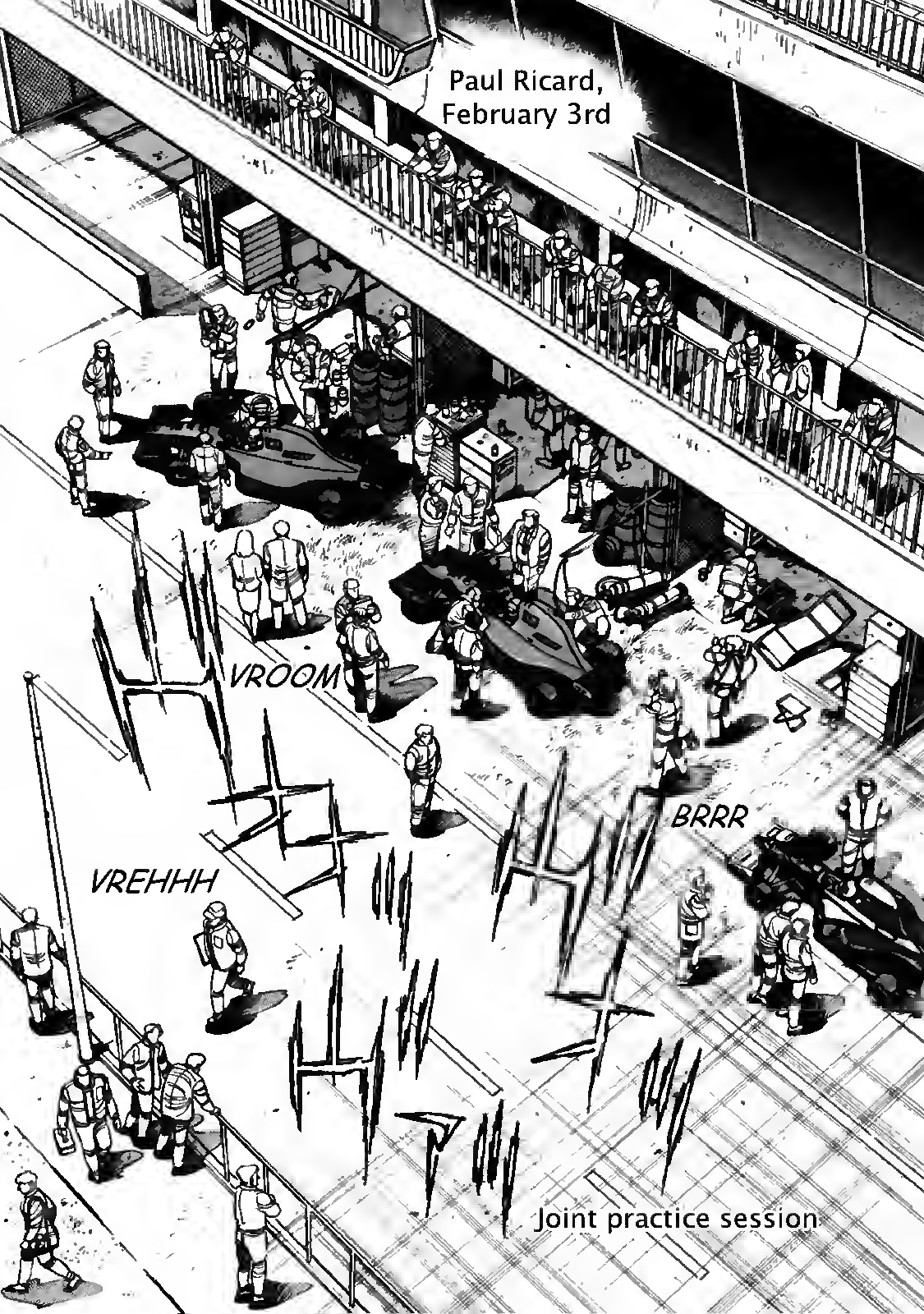
Beautiful moon tonight...

Yes.


Did it move?
Yeah, a little.

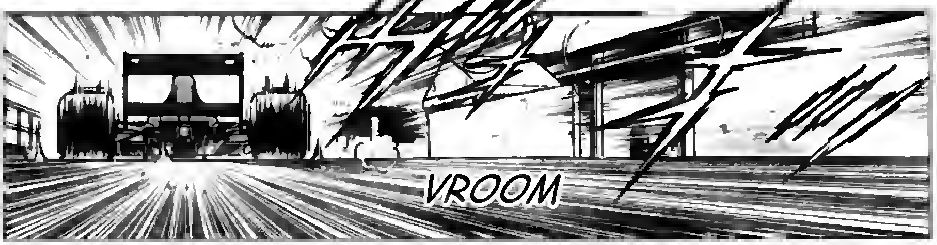

...
Heh. It moved, huh?

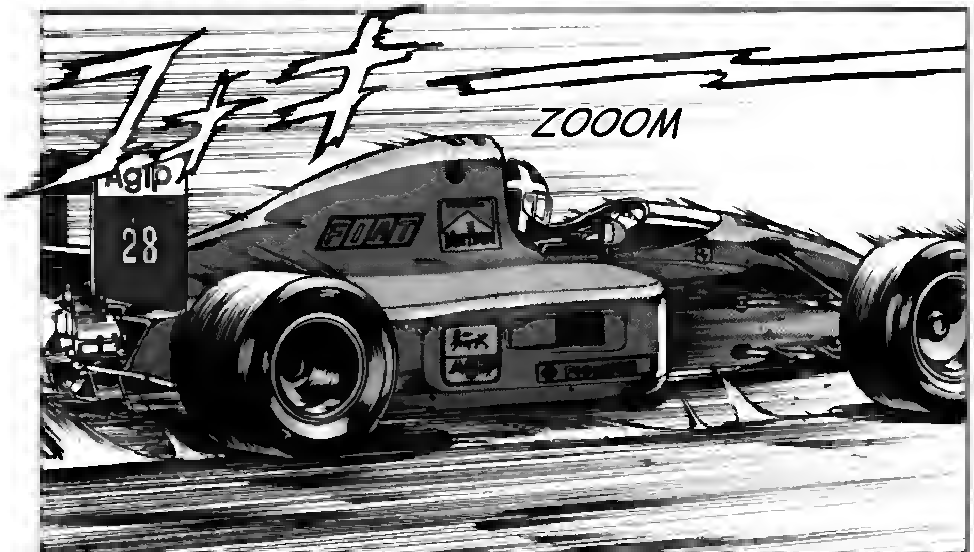
CRACKLE
CRACKLE
CRACKLE
CRACKLE

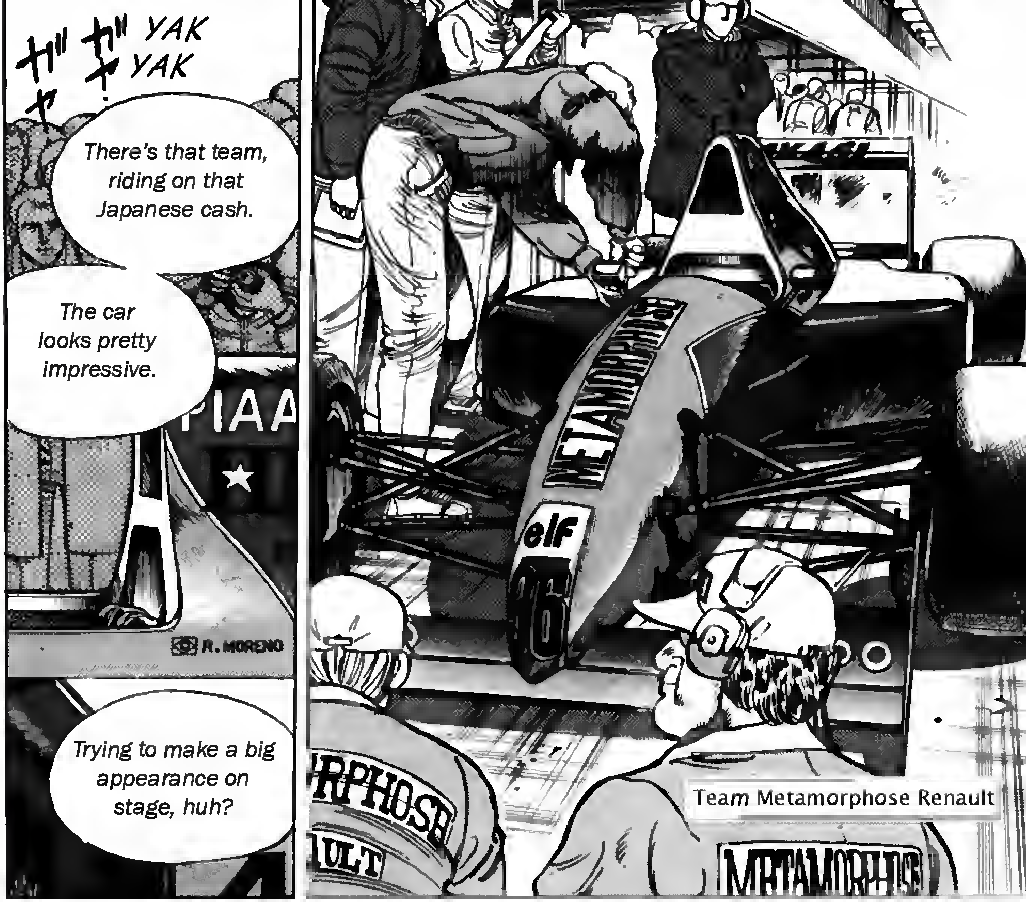

Paul Ricard,
February 3rd
VROOM
BRRR
VREHHH
Joint practice session

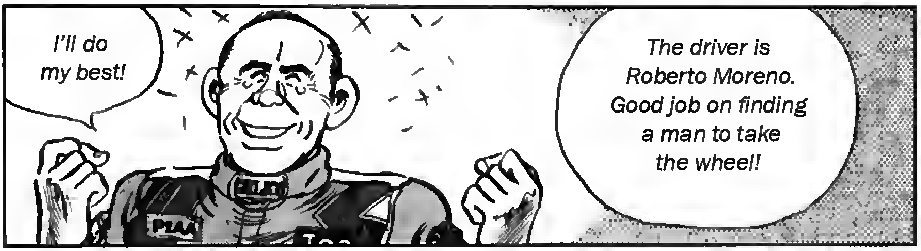
Agip
28
Ferrari

They're dead set on making a comeback this season.
The Ferrari guys sure love doing test runs, don't they?
I heard they've been running on their home courses in Fiorano and Mugello just about every day

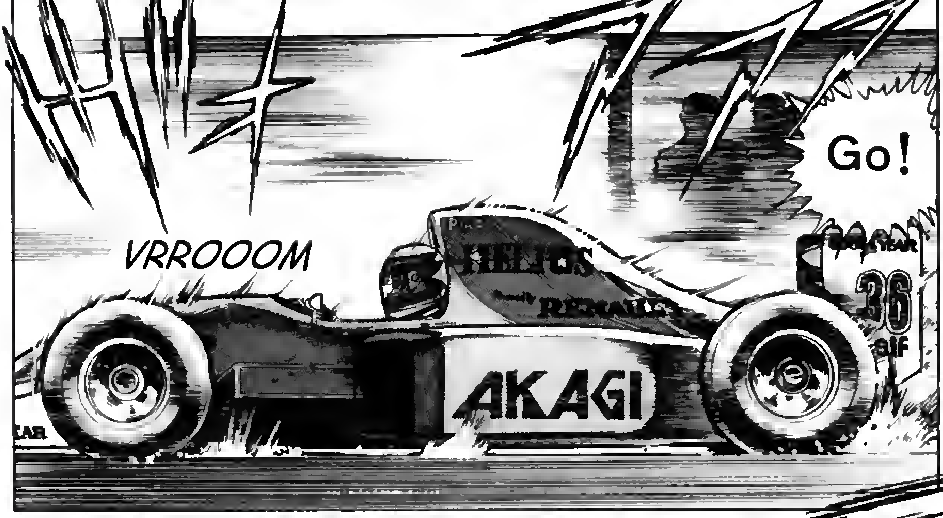

VROOM

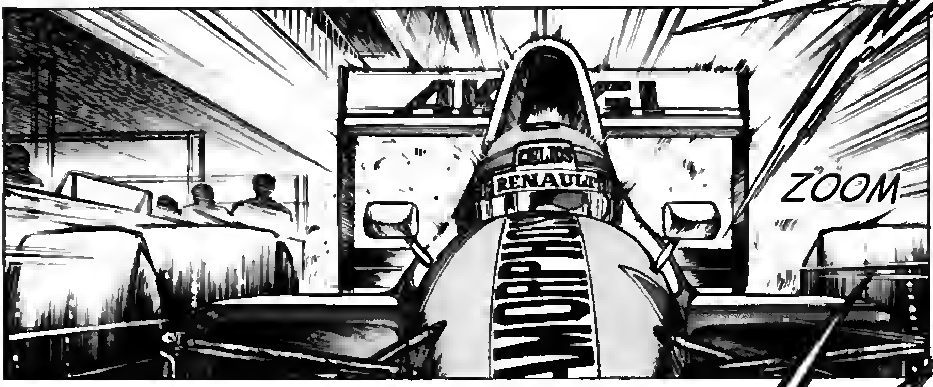

ZOOOM
Agip
28


YAK YAK
There's that team, riding on that Japanese cash.
The car looks pretty impressive.
R. MORENO
Trying to make a big appearance on stage, huh?
elf
Team Metamorphose Renault


I'll do my best!
The driver is Roberto Moreno. Good job on finding a man to take the wheel!

He'll never even be allowed to drive a taxi!
Apparently, he was driving drunk with a woman in the car.
Otoya Yamaguchi was in an accident and lost all of his licenses.

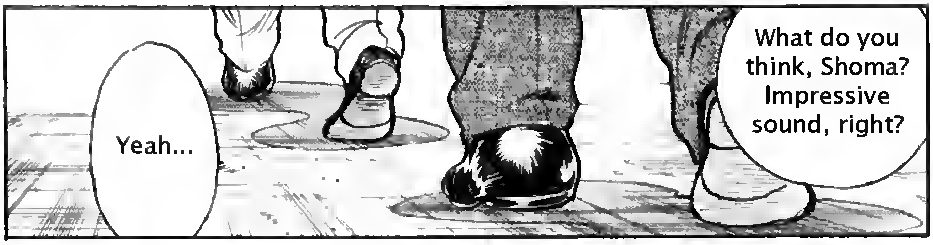

Go!
VRROOOM
AKAGI
36


ZOOM
RENAULT

VROOM
AKAGI

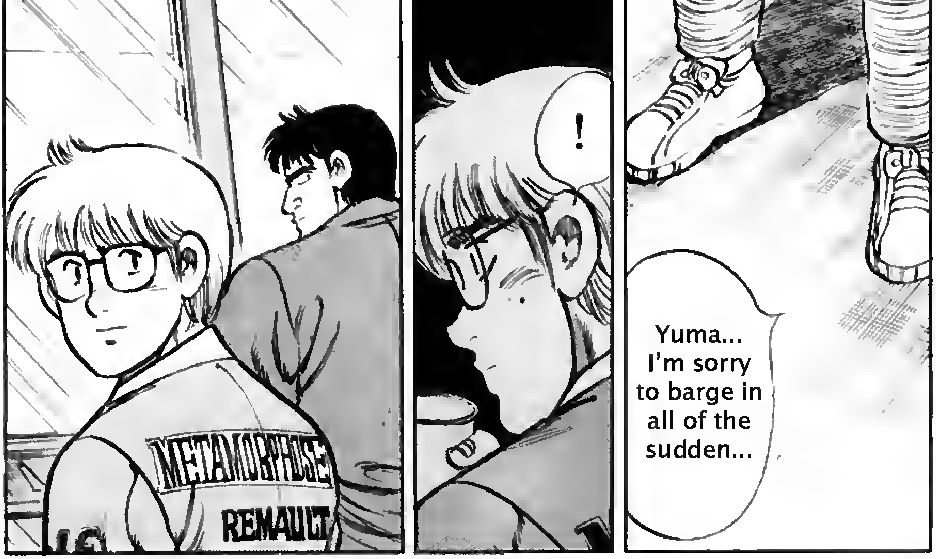
...

ZOOM
I was supposed to be in that car...


Yeah...
What do you think, Shoma? Impressive sound, right?

Well, they sure do live in another world. They're different from us. They've got something special.
What world do these people live in...?
Com-peting against each other in cars going over 300 km/h...
Today's the shakedown. Moreno and the mechanics are working together on that.
What do you say we relax and watch the test runs from above?

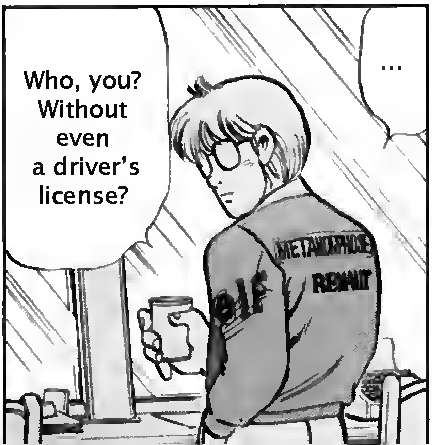
We may be crazy to think that we could reach the heights that he has...
...is one of those people.
So... Gun-ma...
Just like how each and every one of us has our own way of life. We all approach things differently.
But it's all about how we approach it.
Over-come our own ob-stacles, huh...?
For us, it's about the team. We overcome our own obstacles, doing what we can.
ZOOOM
I guess ... You're right!


METAMORPHOSE
RENAULT
!
Yuma... I'm sorry to barge in all of the sudden...

I want to be of use to you again...
Please ...

What do you want?
Otoya ...

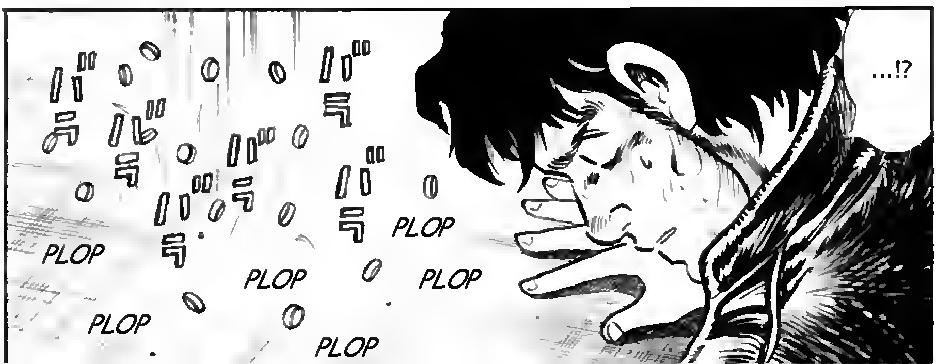
I'll polish cars, carry tires, whatever you need...
I don't mean as a driver... I'll do anything... Anything I can help with...


Who, you? Without even a driver's license?
...
METAMORPHOSE
RENAULT

After I betrayed you, it was all a downwards spiral. I've really hit rock bottom. I truly regret what I did... How I acted...
I'm really ashamed to say, but I have no money. Used it all on a woman. I spent every last penny.

I have no desire to race anymore... Just give me this chance to start my life over... Just one last chance...
WOOSH
So please... I beg you! Give me one more chance!
Please...!

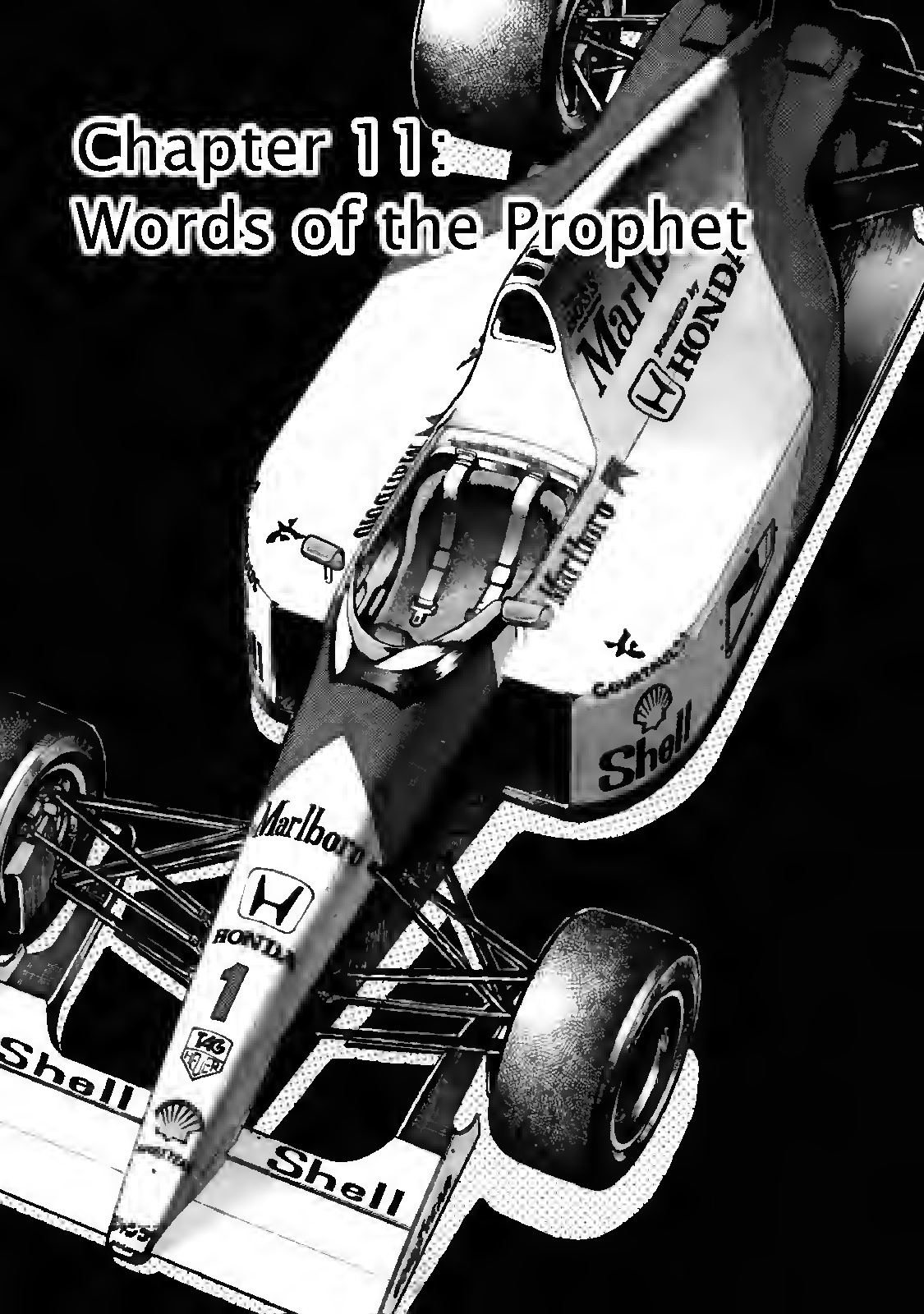
...

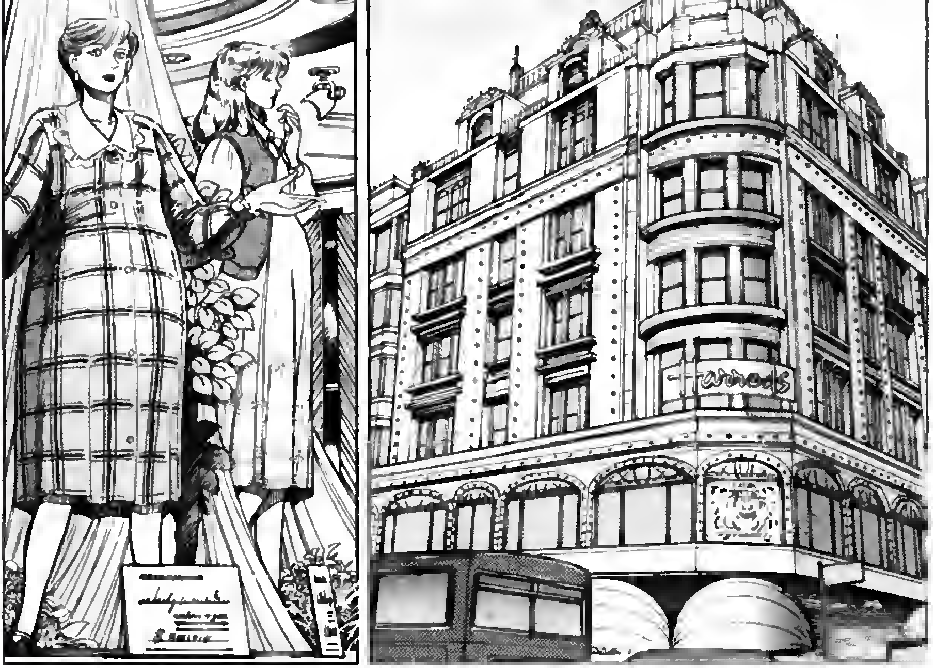

PLOP
PLOP
PLOP
PLOP
PLOP
PLOP
...!?

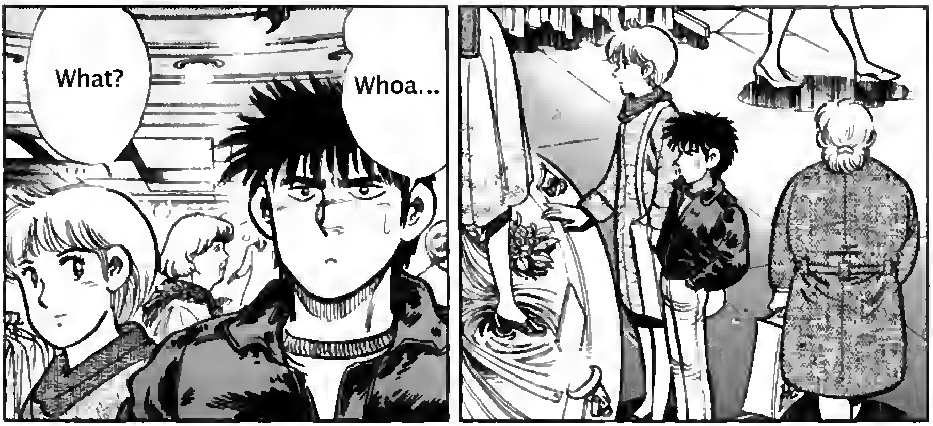
Thanks to you, I don't need these pills anymore
AKAGI
PLOP
PLOP
PLOP
Whether or not you seize an opportunity is up to you.

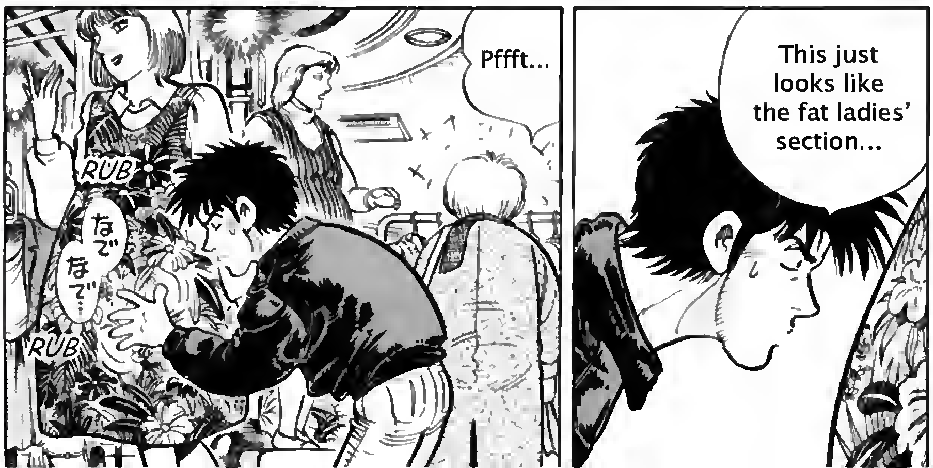
Y-Yes... Of course!
If you truly mean what you say, come to the office later.

Chapter 11: Words of the Prophet





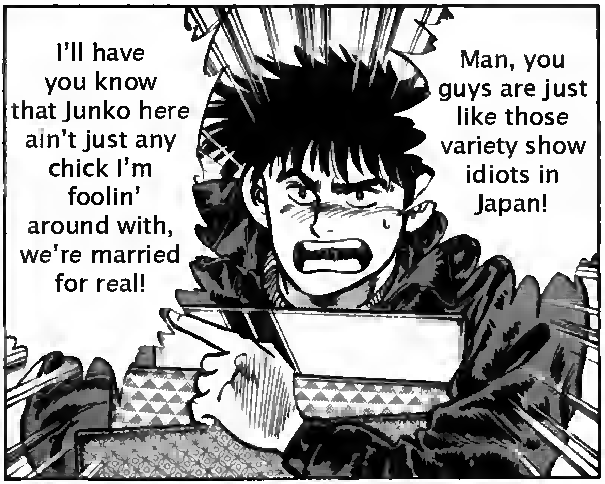

What?
Whoa...

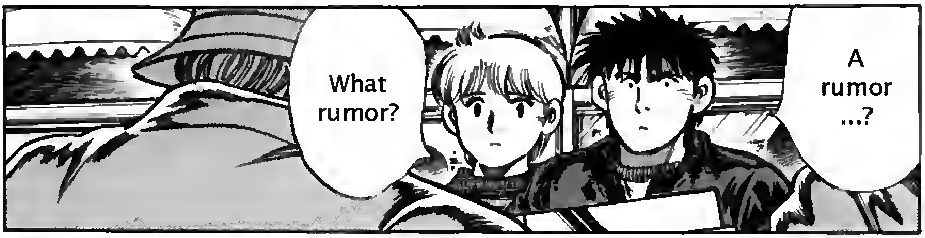

Pffft...
RUB
なで
なで
RUB
This just looks like the fat ladies' section...

Harrods
SNAP
SNAP
SNAP
SNAP
You're Gunma Akagi, the Formula 1 racer right? Can we get an interview?
Wh...what the hell do you guys want!?

An inter-view!?
They're asking for an interview ...
We've been looking for you all day! Please, we'd really like an interview!

Haven't you heard!?
There's a big rumor involving you!

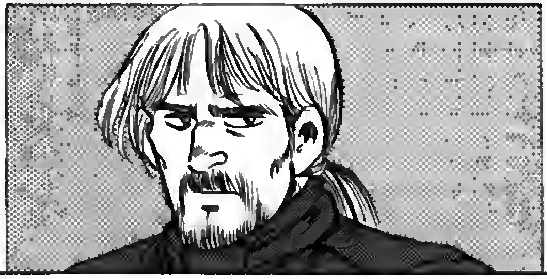

I'll have you know that Junko here ain't just any chick I'm foolin' around with, we're married for real!
Man, you guys are just like those variety show idiots in Japan!


What rumor?
A rumor ...?

It's Jesus! Jesus from the Ferrari team has made some interesting comments concerning you!

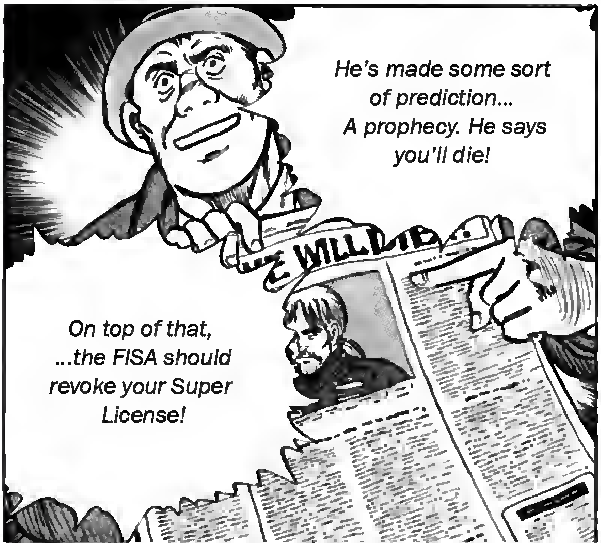
It was on the TV news this morning here in England!
After the practice run at Paul Ricard yesterday, he made some serious claims during an interview!
It's all over the papers!

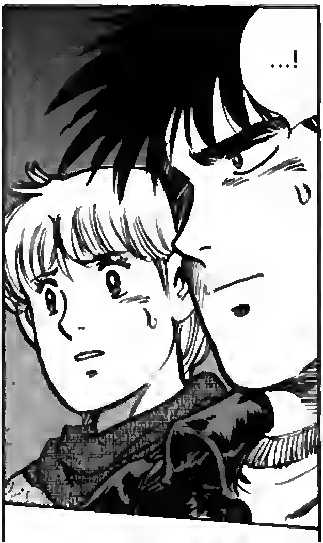
HE WILL DIE !?



Is He a Prophet!? Jesus Christ Drops a Bombshell!

"I foresee that Gunma Akagi will meet with the worst misfortune just after the Formula 1 starts, he won't be able to have his 4th~5th race"


He's made some sort of prediction... A prophecy. He says you'll die!
HE WILL DIE
On top of that, ...the FISA should revoke your Super License!

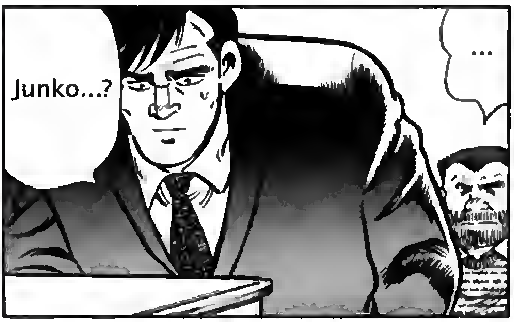


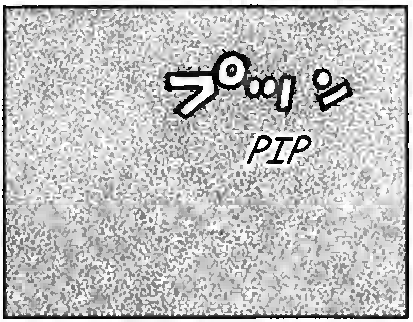
What the hell are they talkin' about...? Let's get outta here, Junko!
How do you comment on Jesus' statement!?
Mister Akagi!
Wait, give us just a minute!

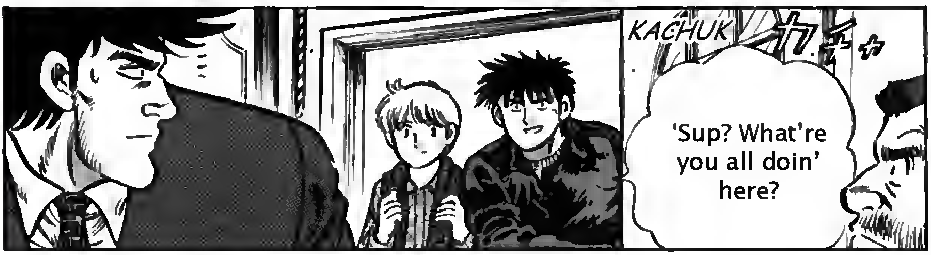
Jesus said that ...?
COM–MENT!
NO

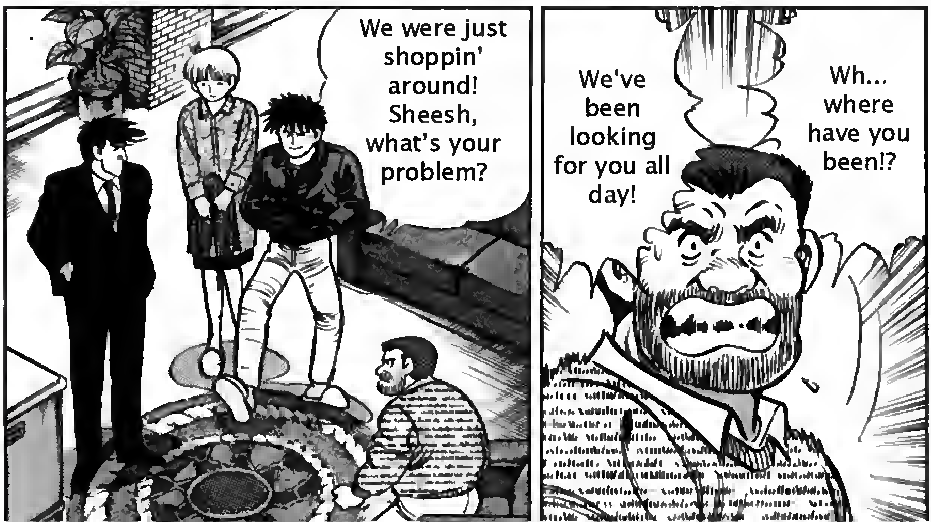
What a mess this is turning into.
Oh for god's sake...
I am not making these comments based on ulterior motives. I hold the lives of people at the utmost importance.
Yeah, I get that already, dammit!
I'd like to make a request to FISA...
...!
If Junko hears about this...
I'm wor-ried...

Suspend Gunma Akagi's Super License for two years!

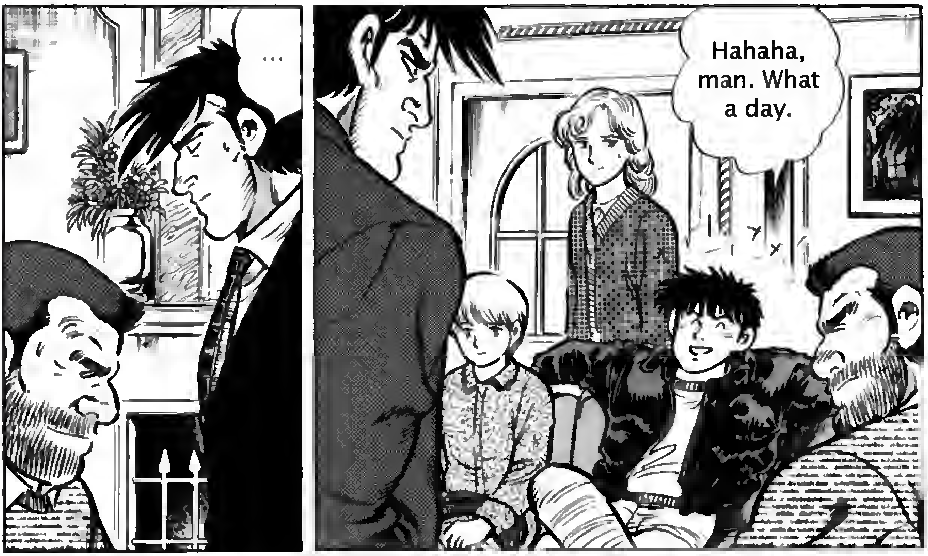

Junko...?
...

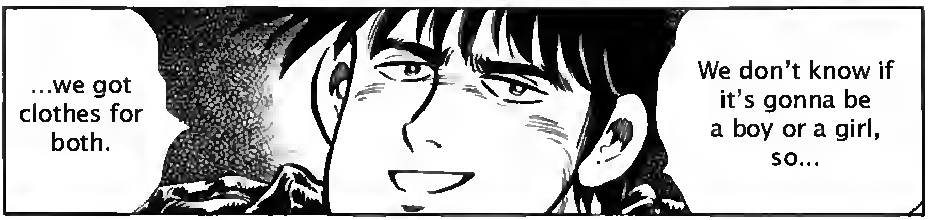

PIP

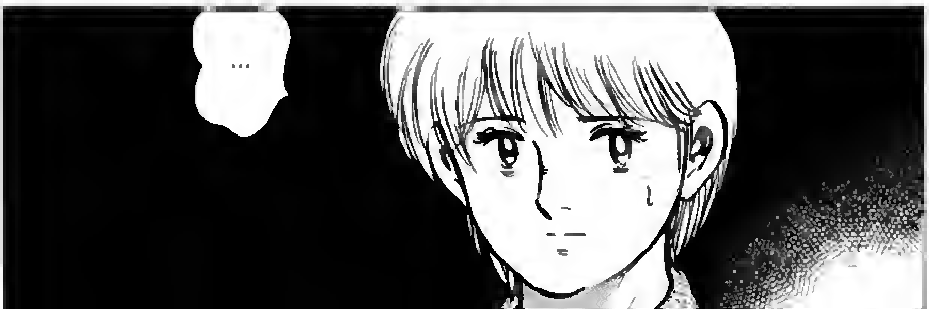

KACHUK
'Sup? What're you all doin' here?


We were just shoppin' around! Sheesh, what's your problem?
We've been looking for you all day!
Wh... where have you been!?

But man, those maternity clothes are hilarious!
Who do they make 'em for, sumo wrestlers?
Haha– haha– haha!
And what's with those baby clothes? They hardly use any cloth, so why are they so damn expensive?


...
Hahaha, man. What a day.


...we got clothes for both.
We don't know if it's gonna be a boy or a girl, so...


...

May 27th.
When is the baby due...?
...
It'll be right at the time when I'll be under that scorchin' sun...
...racin' in my sixth F1 race...
Monaco...!
...
キキ
KRR

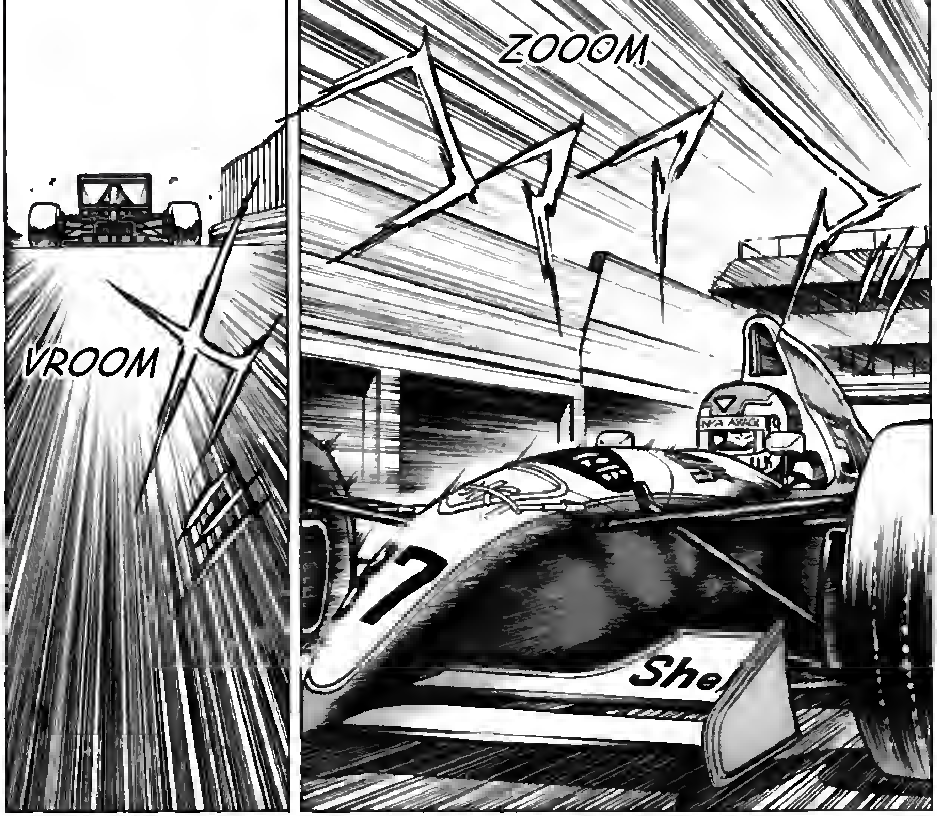
Gunma ain't back yet!
Orman... Kuroi!
SLAM
...waitin' for him to get ba...
KACHUK
There's all these damn reporters swarmin' around Gunma's place...
...uhh.

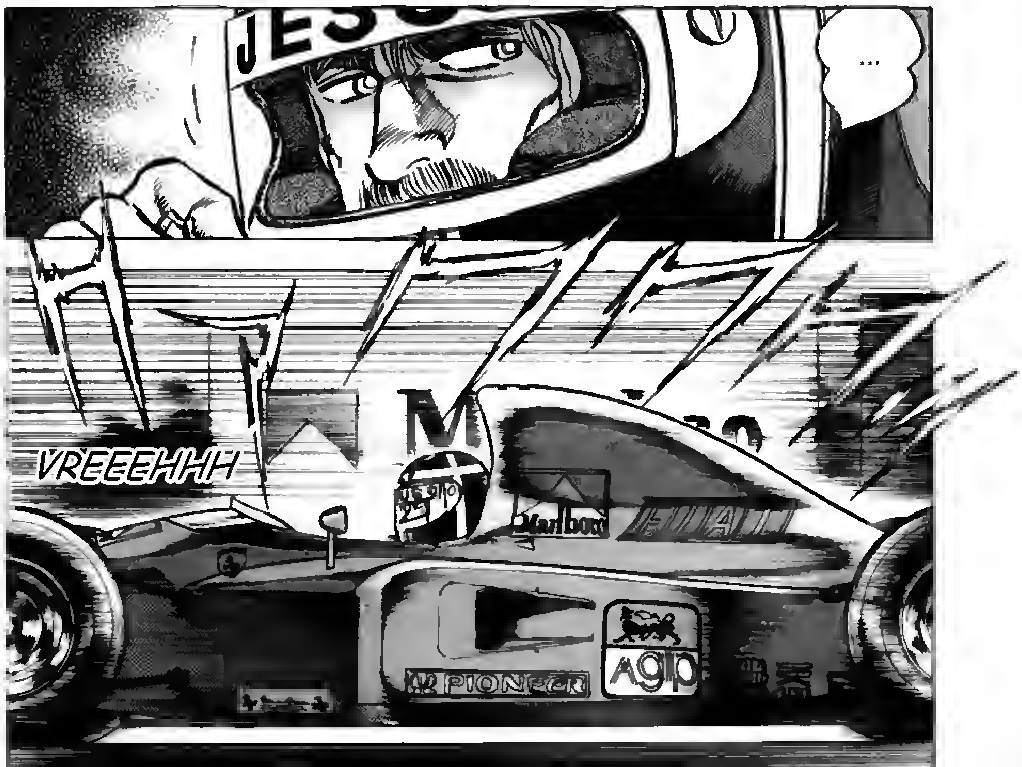
...the future is never decided.
Like I said before...
Quit yer worryin'.
I ain't gonna die
Jesus just doesn't understand ...
...still ain't seen the face of my kid...
I...
Ain't nothin' to worry about...
He just made a few lucky guesses by chance...
There's no way I'm gonna die!
So...

VROOM
Estoril, Portugal
February 10th
VRR
VRRR
28

SILK

YAK
YAK


ZOOOM
VROOM


...
VREEEHHH
Marlboro
PIONEER
agip

フェラーリ
ジーザス、FISAに
異例の提訴！

Ferrari's Jesus makes
shocking statements to FISA!

Demands the suspension of GOCT's
Gunma Akagi's Super License!

GOCT
赤木軍馬のスーパーライセンスの
停止を要求！

FISA会長
マックス・モズレー氏
沈黙を守る！

FISA's president Max Mosley remains silent!

But man... If this prediction that Jesus or whoever's makin' turns out to be true...
Heh heh... Gunma's gonna die, huh? Heh...
I don't mind a bit of drama outside the circuit, but this whole thing is just shinin' the spotlight on Gunma.
Tsk... Asshole, tryin' to make a show for himself...
Hahaha... This is great... Haha...
That'd be just fine... Heh heh heh...
What am I, your servant!?
METAMORPHOSE
RENAULT
Shut up you worthless prick!
Hey, Otoya! Give us a hand here!

Heh heh... What's a prophecy if it doesn't come true?
Heh heh...
Maybe you're full of it, Jesus... But I like where you're going with this...

ZOOOOM

ZOOOOOOOM
"F" Volume 26 THE END

F VOL.26

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